

# College Reading

A COLLECTION OF PROSE, PLAYS, AND POETRY



GEORGE SANDFERTIN

*San Diego State College*

*Second Edition*

*BOSTON*

# COLLEGE READING

A COLLECTION OF PROSE, PLAYS, AND POETRY

D. C. HEATH AND COMPANY

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To My Wife



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# College Reading

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## SECTION

# I

# READING AND WRITING

"When I use a word," Humpty-Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty-Dumpty, "which is to be Master — that's all."

Lewis Carroll, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*

If only it were as easy to express oneself as Humpty-Dumpty seems to think! But how do you get to "be Master" of those elusive words? How can you say what you mean so that others will know what you mean? And how can you know what other "Master" writers mean *their* words to mean? This book is designed to help you solve both problems. The selections from Section II to the end of the book are taken from the work of some of the best modern writers, with questions at the end of each selection to test your reading comprehension. To help you in your own writing, these selections are arranged as models, with the simpler forms (autobiographical sketch, explanation) coming first. The introduction to each section and the questions at the end point out the technique of each form. You can learn much from close study of these selections and, of course, from constant practice in writing. And, to begin with, you can profit from some useful tips on reading and writing given by professionals here in Section I.

First, how well can you read? Reading is basic to every field of learning, yet thousands of freshmen are entering college each year with elementary school reading ability. Fortunately, something can be done about this. Bad reading habits can be corrected. Reading experts and clinics have taught college students and businessmen all over the country how to extract more meaning from the printed page — in less time. If you are "piled" with reading assignments, as you will be in college, don't groan. Learn to read faster.

In the first place, advises reading expert Paul D. Leedy, decide in advance your *purpose* in reading a particular selection ("a rapid, general impression" or

to acquire "facts and specific details"). Next, "skim" the selection; read the first sentence, or the topic sentence, of each paragraph, and note the main divisions of the author's thought, the main topics treated. Finally, go back over the article carefully, be sure to spot the topic sentence in each paragraph this time, and also the key words which convey the essential meaning (for example, in this paragraph you are now reading, the key words in the first two sentences are: FIRST . . . DECIDE . . . YOUR PURPOSE IN READING . . . NEXT, "SKIM" . . .); also, continually check your memory as you read to see if you can recall the chief points the author has made thus far (in this paragraph, the points about purpose, skimming, and specific suggestions for the careful reading). Leedy also suggests an interesting exercise to increase your "eye-span" (the number of words your eyes take in at a single glance) and warns against "regressions" — glancing back over the words you have just read.

These suggestions of Leedy's have been concerned with the *mechanics* of reading, the ABC of the subject. But there is more to it than that. You read not for words, primarily, but for ideas. What is the best way to master an author's thought?

It is, asserts Mortimer Adler, to read *actively* instead of passively. Don't use only your eyes; use your mind, and make your own thought tangible by *expressing* it in marginal notes, underlining, numbering of points — actual writing in the book you are reading. (If you do not own the book, substitute a notebook or sheet of paper.) This is sound advice. In reading, we are likely to mistake vague sensations ("I agree with the author on that," "this is pleasant," "how foolish!") for thoughts. But if we force our minds to state the author's chief points by underlining or numbering them, or by making a brief résumé at the end of the chapters — if we exercise our critical judgment by jotting down a fact the author has overlooked, or an authority who contradicts him, in the margin — then we are reading creatively; we are assimilating his ideas and making them our own.

But, interjects Virginia Woolf, we read not only for facts and ideas, but for pleasure. This is creative, too, in a different sense of the word. It exercises the *imagination*. For this kind of aesthetic benefit from your reading, she advises you, first, to read what you *want* to read; next, to be aware of the special kind of pleasure you expect from that type of book (e.g., biography is read "to satisfy that curiosity which possesses us sometimes when in the evening we linger in front of a house where the lights are lit and the blinds not yet drawn, and each floor of the house shows us a different section of human life in being"); finally, to give yourself completely to the author, accept him with all his prejudices and idiosyncrasies and identify yourself with him so that you see and feel most deeply his vision of the world. Afterwards, you can reassume your own convictions and, by coolly comparing one book with another, one writer with another, begin the formation of literary taste.

If you read with mechanical efficiency, and with creative thought and appreciation, you have begun to be “Master” of the words of others. What about your own words? Reading and writing are closely related, and one of Virginia Woolf’s suggestions for learning to read more comprehensively is that you try *writing* the kind of thing you are reading, so that you will gain an inside knowledge of what the author is attempting. How, then, does the writer go about his job? What do writers themselves tell us, in this section, about the writing process?

First of all, says Stephen Leacock, a writer must have an idea. What a headache --- not only to you, but to every writer who ever penned a line! Leacock tells how A. A. Milne went through agony to get his ideas; how one thought leads to another (e.g., blank sheet of paper before you, blanks to fill out, the blanks you had to fill out to get into college — there’s an idea!); how you can sometimes arrive at something by simply jotting down anything that comes into your head (maybe your car is on your mind . . . needs repairs . . . no time, no money . . . the nuisance of keeping a modern “convenience” operating, ought to call them *inconveniences* . . . *Idea*: humorous theme on “Modern Inconveniences”). Leacock is an old hand, an experienced writer. He knows that some ideas “just come,” but many others have to be sweated for. “Writing has got to be done deliberately,” he decides. “We can’t wait for it to come. On these terms, I claim that anybody can learn to write, just as anybody can learn to swim . . . up to the limits imposed by his aptitude and physique.”

And, he adds, once you have found your idea, develop it with *sincerity*: a “direct relation, a sort of inevitable relation . . . between the words used and the things narrated.” The sentence “Our farm was fifteen miles from a high school and it was too far to walk” has the quality of sincerity, which is lacking in “Our farm was situated some ten miles from the nearest emporium of learning, to wit, a high school, a distance beyond the range of Shanks’ mare.” This sounds artificial because the writer has taken his mind off the subject and is thinking exclusively of high-sounding words with which to embroider it. If you have this tendency in your themes, try following “readability” expert Rudolf Flesch’s formula for clearness and simplicity:

- simple connectives (*then, so*) in place of cumbersome ones (*furthermore, consequently*)
- short nouns and verbs in place of long ones with prefixes or suffixes (*add to for supplement*)
- plenty of “personal” words (proper names, pronouns like *you* and *I*) and “personal” sentences (commands, exclamations, etc.)
- relatively short sentences (average length eighteen words)
- simple or compound sentences in place of complex sentences
- natural word order (including preposition at end of sentence)

Don’t follow this formula blindly, but use it, within reason, to avoid artificiality, to make your writing more natural and clear.\*

\* For example, compare these two sentences, the first from a labor union contract, the second Flesch’s rewriting of it:



Having found an idea in your subconscious mind, you will be developing it in a sincere, readable style. But here come two British authors with a final caution: think of your reader's mind --- *be logical*.

Graves and Hodge, the British authors, list four chief causes of the illogical, confused writing which they say abounds today: haste, distraction, timidity, and a divided mind. The last two are more common among bureaucrats and politicians, people who don't want to commit themselves on any subject or who have to write things that are against their private convictions, like "Communists uneasily following the party-line." You can avoid these sources of confusion by writing on subjects about which you feel strongly. But what about the first two causes, haste and distraction? Is it eleven o'clock on the night before the paper is due — now that that typewriter is finally clacking? Is there a radio, or a bull session, going full blast behind you? If so, you may be repeating yourself in several different places in your theme, or falling into constructions like "If you want to make a good speech, take your hands out of your pocket, open your mouth wide, and throw yourself into it."

"Modern conditions of living encourage habitual distraction," Graves and Hodge warn, "and, though there are still opportunities for comparative quiet, most people feel that they are not really alive unless they are in close touch with their fellow men — and close touch involves constant disturbance." You may find that you can write neater, more coherent sentences in the library than in the dormitory. And don't hesitate to revise a careless sentence, after the theme is written, if by so doing you can improve it.

Maugham and Faulkner, world-famous novelists, take us a little beyond these practical considerations in their selections, concluding the section. If, as beginning writers, we need not yet worry much about the psychology of the artist and the meaning of art, we can, as readers, enjoy their comments.

What makes a writer tick? asks Maugham. Why does he write in the first place? Not for money (the average writer is not well paid, although a few have made fortunes), not even for fame, but for the unsurpassed joy of creative work. Maugham then eloquently describes this process by which the writer's "sins and his follies, the unhappiness that befalls him, his unrequited love, his physical defects, illness, privation, his hopes abandoned, his griefs, humiliations, everything is transformed by his power into material and by writing he can overcome it." This is the glory of art for the artist, who is "the only free man."

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"Such grievance shall be submitted to such impartial umpire in writing and he shall promptly afford to the Employee or Employees concerned, the Union and the Company, a reasonable opportunity to present evidence and to be heard in support of their respective positions with regard to such grievance."

(Contract)

"The next step is a letter to the umpire. As soon as the umpire gets it, he must give everyone a chance to tell his side of the story and prove it."

(Flesch)

And the meaning of art, adds Faulkner, is that it brings to men the reminder and the conviction of "the old universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed — love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice." The writer's duty is "to help man endure by lifting his heart."

These are profound matters. In the short stories, plays, and novels in the second half of this anthology, they will be illustrated. But for the present, we return to the practical business of getting the right word down on paper. For even in so humble a composition as a freshman theme there are the right words we seek, and the wrong ones that come thronging, unasked. Here, to sum up what has been said thus far, are five concise hints to help you "be Master" in your writing:

1. *Have something to say.* Nothing comes from nothing. Professional writers spend at least half their time getting an idea and planning a piece — less than half in the actual writing. Use your own experience, your own enthusiasms, whenever you can. Don't write about things at secondhand if you can help it; write about the local politician you knew, not the national one in the headlines.

2. *Use concrete words.* Don't say that the "consideration offered you was not sufficient"; say "the pay was too low." Don't say your roommate was a great joker — quote one of his best jokes.

3. *Use simple sentences.* Rudolf Flesch gives eighteen words as the best average length. This doesn't mean you should arbitrarily make every sentence that long; it does mean to keep most of them short, but not monotonous. It means to avoid complicated, overlapping clauses which run on at a length which is confusing to the reader who, although he may not realize it, is getting as tired of such sentences, if they can be called sentences, as you are of this one.

4. *Include some human interest.* Remember, you are writing to someone as well as about something. If you were talking to a friend, you would address him as "you" from time to time, and you'd make some effort to interest him in the subject by telling him stories about it, bringing people into the picture. An essay on chemistry can be entertaining even to the unscientific reader if you caution against mixing two substances by showing how your absent-minded professor did it, and describing his embarrassment at the subsequent fireworks.

5. *Organize your thoughts.* Easier said than done, but if you don't know where you're going in the piece, how's your reader going to get there? You may number your points 1-2-3, etc., as I have done here; you may work from cause to effect, or from effect back to cause; you can avoid a dull beginning by starting at a point of suspense, then explaining what led up to it before you tell what happens. But have an organization; know not only your main point but the two, three, or four sub-points or concrete examples by which you are going to put it across. And don't take the first organization which suggests itself to you, because that will hardly ever be the best one. The way to start writing is not to write, but to think.

Paul D. Leedy

## How to Read More Efficiently

*Paul D. Leedy is a member of the staff of The Reading Institute, New York University, where he teaches college classes in reading improvement. He has also been in charge of business and industrial programs of reading improvement at the home offices of nationally famous firms in New York. A native Pennsylvanian, Mr. Leedy was educated at Dickinson College and the University of Pennsylvania, where he received his M.A. He has been a book reviewer, editorial consultant, lecturer, and personal counselor, and has taught at Dickinson, Rutgers, and New York University. He is the author of Reading Improvement for Adults (1956).*

Formal reading instruction ceased for most of us in the elementary school. Through the upper grades, in high school, in college, and on through life the world has assumed that we knew "how to read." The stark and awful truth is that most of us read slowly, laboriously, and inefficiently. Few people have had the training necessary to make them masters of the skills of reading. Generally we crawl along the printways at a rate of one hundred to two hundred words a minute, whereas the efficient reader ought to fly at six hundred to a thousand words a minute, and remember at least 80 per cent of everything that he has read! Check yourself against these specifications for the first-rate reader.

This chapter will suggest a few simple techniques for improving your reading skill. Put these simple suggestions into practice and watch the results.

First, settle clearly in your own mind just what your purpose in reading is. Is it that you want merely a rapid, general impression and a surface view of the text? In that case you will skim. Or do you wish to read more carefully, noting the facts and specific details in order to recall them accurately later? If so, you will read rapidly with attention to details. Perhaps you may wish to understand clearly the more complex organization of the thought, to be aware of every shade and nuance of reasoning, weighing fact against fact, and to form an opinion on the basis of what your author has said. This calls for critical reading. By its very nature this type of reading is slower and most exacting in its demands for highly developed reading skills.

In general, skimming is basic to most other types of reading. It is the skill that gives the "airplane view" of the printed page. Too many of us begin to read without first trying to discover the lay of the land or the topography of the thought. The normal procedure is to begin at the first word of the first paragraph and plod through to the last word in the final paragraph. By so doing, the average adult feels satisfied and congratulates himself upon "having read it all."

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Nothing could be farther from the truth. Most of us think that when we look at each word — or the still less efficient reader, when he mumbles each word inwardly to himself — that we have “read” the selection. It does not trouble us that frequently we have lost sight of the organization of the selection as a whole, that the facts are jumbled and indistinct, that the material does not stand out with maplike clearness, nor the thought in bold relief.

The average reader is not aware of paragraph divisions. Before you begin to read, look down along the left-hand margin of the column of print. See those indentations?

To the skilled reader each indentation indicates the beginning of a new thought development. Try reading the first sentence — just the first sentence only, of each paragraph. Drive yourself through a chapter in a book, or an article in a magazine, reading only the first sentence of each paragraph. Before long you will be aware that this procedure is making a great deal of sense; that the thought is flowing smoothly and progressively. If the first sentence does not make sense, try the concluding sentence of the paragraph. The main thing is to go on, paragraph after paragraph, merely skimming the surface, like a dragonfly skimming over the surface of a pool.

When you have finished you will be aware of two things: first, you will have an over-all view of the entire selection which will be as thrilling upon first experience as looking out over an expansive countryside from the cabin of a plane; secondly, you will be aware of motion — the onward, irresistible surge of thought. Until many people have had this latter experience, that of a conscious awareness that they were reading *thoughts* — not words — they have not known what real reading is! Too often we labor a lifetime under the delusion that reading words is reading. Words are merely the symbols through which the thought of the author is transferred to the mind of the reader. The skilled reader always recognizes that the thought flows through the lines of print as a message over a copper wire. The wire indeed is important, but far more so is the thought that it conveys. Read with only one question in the background of your consciousness: Does this make sense? If it does, spur yourself on. More thought lies ahead. Speed down the printways after it!

Occasionally you will find a writer with whom this method of skimming does not seem to bring results. Such writers are the more difficult ones to read. They may tuck the “key” sentence away at the end of the paragraph, or hide it in the middle. But writers usually follow a consistent pattern of thought development, and once you have cracked one or two paragraphs and understand how the author works, all the others will likely show a similarity of structure and plan. This semblance of structure we call an author’s “style.”

The skimming technique you may object to as being very superficial, and so it is. It was meant to be nothing else.

“But,” you insist, “I want to read with more thoroughness.” Good; let us go

back to the beginning and read the chapter again, this time demonstrating the technique of rapid yet careful reading. You see, everything depends upon the *purpose* you have in reading. Your purpose now is a more inclusive, a more serious one. You seek a more comprehensive grasp of the written word.

At this point you plunge into the forest. Up to now you have merely surveyed its general extent and vastness, and noted the principal landmarks. Now, in among the towering trees you go. Every experienced woodsman knows that there is a right and wrong way to go into the woods. Just so, the skilled reader recognizes a right and wrong way to attack a page of print. What is the first step toward reading more comprehensively?

First, *note the main thought* of the paragraph. This is exactly what you did in skimming. Find it and fix it firmly and clearly in your mind. In most cases it will be the first sentence, but occasionally it may occur elsewhere. Do not attempt to memorize the words of the author, but grasp his central thought. See if you can immediately rephrase the main idea, mainly in your own words. This will help you to fix the thought in your own mind. Now, with the thought firmly anchored in your consciousness, read rapidly through the rest of the paragraph to glean contributory ideas which expand, explain, or enlarge upon the main thought. This is what teachers often refer to as the "development of the idea."

In reading rapidly look for the words within the paragraph that express ideas without adding unnecessary detail. Not all words are equally important. You recognize this fact when you send a telegram. The eye sees instantaneously much more than the mind actually "reads," and there are only certain words within each sentence that the mind needs to dwell upon to get the thought of the author. For example, read the following:

Get the habit of looking for the significant, meaningful words in each line of print. Frequently they are few, and whereas your eyes race down the crowded printlanes, your mind idles because it need not digest every single, solitary word to get the meaning.

How many words did you read? There are 44 words in that selection, and unless you are a skillful reader, you probably read all forty-four of them. Here, however, is what you should have read:

GET HABIT LOOKING FOR SIGNIFICANT WORDS. FREQUENTLY FEW.  
EYES RACE THE PRINTLANES, MIND IDLES. NEED NOT DIGEST EVERY  
WORD TO GET MEANING.

You have lost nothing of the thought. You have reduced your reading load by exactly 50 per cent! This means that if you read a 40,000-word treatise, you need not give your full attention to each one of the 40,000 words. While you *see* all of them, you *read* only about 20,000 or 25,000. You have sacrificed nothing of the meaning, you have merely sloughed off the unimportant verbiage.

Practice this telegraphic reading. It is one of the principal secrets to reading faster, and more comprehensively.

Always check your reading for comprehension of the facts. This is most easily done by your telling yourself the details of what you have read. See if you can. Can you enumerate the points in the order in which the author made them? Do you know what the main idea of the first paragraph is? Could you outline clearly and coherently the thought of the author without referring to the text? These questions, and others similar, will test how well you comprehend. You should never fall below 80 per cent on any quiz you give yourself.

We also read faster when we see more. The eye picks up an eyeful of print as one might gather an armload of wood. As a child I was sent out to get wood for the fire. I came in from the woodpile, one stick in each hand. I had all, I thought, that I could carry. Then my father showed me how to carry an armload of wood. I immediately increased my carrying efficiency many times.

So with the reader. The word-by-word reader brings the thought from the printed page in dribs. Because of inefficient reading habits the eye of the poor reader has looked at a line of print and has seen only a very small fraction of it. When one fixes his eyes on any particular spot, he is aware that he is able to see on either side of this point with perfect clarity up to a peripheral area where the field of vision begins to blur. This readable area, that one sees with a single glance, is the "eye-span." Span can be developed so that with proper training one can force himself to see more and more at one glance. Increased eye-span means greater intake; greater intake, more efficient reading.

A simple exercise with the daily newspaper will help you develop increased eye-span. Take any column of newsprint and locate a three- or four-letter word in the middle of the line. Beginning from either side of this chosen word, draw straight, diverging lines about four or five inches long with a pen or soft pencil, until the lines widen to column width and touch the printed lines that separate the columns. Now place a card or blotter over the marked area. Fix your eyes on a spot near the top of the triangle that you have drawn. Pull the card down quickly and shove it back into position, allowing about half a second of exposure. What words did you see between the two lines? Now fix your eyes farther down the column that is covered by the card. Repeat the pull-push technique. How many words did you see this time? Repeat this again and again. Practice every day. Soon you will realize that you are gradually seeing more and more at a single glance. Your eye-span will be increasing.

There are many other factors that may be mentioned in connection with learning to read faster and more comprehensively. One of these is the arresting of the impulse to glance back over the line of print one has just read in order to pick up a word or phrase that one thinks he has missed. Such backward glances are called "regressions." Most of the time they indicate that the reader is not mentally alert, or that he has formed a poor reading habit. For the sake

of practice, when you find yourself tempted to look back to check on something you think you have missed or not seen correctly, arrest your impulse and drive yourself on. Drive yourself to get from the oncoming text its full meaning. Frequently you will find that you did see and comprehend quite adequately what you thought at the instant of the impulse to regress that you had missed. The eye sees more than we think it sees; the mind often records more word-meanings than we realize. Only when the thought goes completely to pieces should you check back to locate the difficulty.

Reading is an extremely complex visuo-psychological process. Marked reading retardation should have the best advice of a reading specialist. The quickest way for anyone to improve his reading efficiency is to seek the help of a reading center, such as are to be found at many of the leading universities throughout the country. But for much of our population these reading centers are not available. Nevertheless, the average adult can improve his reading rate and comprehension and, through persistent effort and intelligent application of the suggestions which have been very briefly outlined in this chapter, he should notice within a relatively short time that he is speeding over the highways of print with more efficiency and less effort.

#### QUESTIONS

1. How fast can you read (words per minute)? Compare with "the efficient reader."
2. Explain the technique of "skimming." When is it most useful?
3. What is "telegraphic reading"? What is a "regression"?
4. Without rereading, list Leedy's chief points.

*Mortimer J. Adler, Professor of Philosophy of Law at the University of Chicago, finds it necessary to read a book through three times to comprehend it completely: once for analysis, once for interpretation, and once for evaluation. Using this method, described in Adler's best seller How to Read a Book (1940), one can "actively" read, at most, ten books a year. To encourage Americans to read more comprehensively and so to be better informed about the world, Adler cooperated with President Hutchins in the much-discussed "Great Books" course at Chicago. In the scholarly world, Adler is known as a defender of the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas.*

You know you have to read "between the lines" to get the most out of anything. I want to persuade you to do something equally important in the course of your reading. I want to persuade you to "write between the lines." Unless you do, you are not likely to do the most efficient kind of reading.

I contend, quite bluntly, that marking up a book is not an act of mutilation but of love.

You shouldn't mark up a book which isn't yours. Librarians (or your friends) who lend you books expect you to keep them clean, and you should. If you decide that I am right about the usefulness of marking books, you will have to buy them. Most of the world's great books are available today, in reprint editions, at less than a dollar.

There are two ways in which one can own a book. The first is the property right you establish by paying for it, just as you pay for clothes and furniture. But this act of purchase is only the prelude to possession. Full ownership comes only when you have made it a part of yourself, and the best way to make yourself a part of it is by writing in it. An illustration may make the point clear. You buy a beefsteak and transfer it from the butcher's icebox to your own. But you do not own the beefsteak in the most important sense until you consume it and get it into your bloodstream. I am arguing that books, too, must be absorbed in your bloodstream to do you any good.

Confusion about what it means to *own* a book leads people to a false reverence for paper, binding, and type — a respect for the physical thing — the craft of the printer rather than the genius of the author. They forget that it is possible for a man to acquire the idea, to possess the beauty, which a great book contains, without staking his claim by pasting his bookplate inside the cover. Having a fine library doesn't prove that its owner has a mind enriched by books; it proves nothing more than that he, his father, or his wife, was rich enough to buy them.

From *The Saturday Review of Literature*, July 6, 1941. By permission of the author and the publishers.



There are three kinds of book owners. The first has all the standard sets and best-sellers — unread, untouched. (This deluded individual owns woodpulp and ink, not books.) The second has a great many books — a few of them read through, most of them dipped into, but all of them as clean and shiny as the day they were bought. (This person would probably like to make books his own, but is restrained by a false respect for their physical appearance.) The third has a few books or many — every one of them dog-eared and dilapidated, shaken and loosened by continual use, marked and scribbled in from front to back. (This man owns books.)

Is it false respect, you may ask, to preserve intact and unblemished a beautifully printed book, an elegantly bound edition? Of course not. I'd no more scribble all over a first edition of "Paradise Lost" than I'd give my baby a set of crayons and an original Rembrandt! I wouldn't mark up a painting or a statue. Its soul, so to speak, is inseparable from its body. And the beauty of a rare edition or of a richly manufactured volume is like that of a painting or a statue.

But the soul of a book *can* be separated from its body. A book is more like the score of a piece of music than it is like a painting. No great musician confuses a symphony with the printed sheets of music. Arturo Toscanini reveres Brahms, but Toscanini's score of the C-minor Symphony is so thoroughly marked up that no one but the maestro himself can read it. The reason why a great conductor makes notations on his musical scores — marks them up again and again each time he returns to study them — is the reason why you should mark your books. If your respect for magnificent binding or typography gets in the way, buy yourself a cheap edition and pay your respects to the author.

Why is marking up a book indispensable to reading? First, it keeps you awake. (And I don't mean merely conscious; I mean wide awake.) In the second place, reading, if it is active, is thinking, and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The marked book is usually the thought-through book. Finally, writing helps you remember the thoughts you had, or the thoughts the author expressed. Let me develop these three points.

If reading is to accomplish anything more than passing time, it must be active. You can't let your eyes glide across the lines of a book and come up with an understanding of what you have read. Now an ordinary piece of light fiction, like, say, "Gone with the Wind," doesn't require the most active kind of reading. The books you read for pleasure can be read in a state of relaxation, and nothing is lost. But a great book, rich in ideas and beauty, a book that raises and tries to answer great fundamental questions, demands the most active reading of which you are capable. You don't absorb the ideas of John Dewey the way you absorb the crooning of Mr. Vallee. You have to reach for them. That you cannot do while you're asleep.

If, when you've finished reading a book, the pages are filled with your notes,

you know that you read actively. The most famous *active* reader of great books I know is President Hutchins, of the University of Chicago. He also has the hardest schedule of business activities of any man I know. He invariably reads with a pencil, and sometimes, when he picks up a book and pencil in the evening, he finds himself, instead of making intelligent notes, drawing what he calls "caviar factories" on the margins. When that happens, he puts the book down. He knows he's too tired to read, and he's just wasting time.

But, you may ask, why is writing necessary? Well, the physical act of writing, with your own hand, brings words and sentences more sharply before your mind and preserves them better in your memory. To set down your reaction to important words and sentences you have read, and the questions they have raised in your mind, is to preserve those reactions and sharpen those questions.

Even if you wrote on a scratch pad, and threw the paper away when you had finished writing, your grasp of the book would be surer. But you don't have to throw the paper away. The margins (top and bottom, as well as side), the end-papers, the very space between the lines, are all available. They aren't sacred. And, best of all, your marks and notes become an integral part of the book and stay there forever. You can pick up the book the following week or year, and there are all your points of agreement, disagreement, doubt, and inquiry. It's like resuming an interrupted conversation with the advantage of being able to pick up where you left off.

And that is exactly what reading a book should be: a conversation between you and the author. Presumably he knows more about the subject than you do; naturally, you'll have the proper humility as you approach him. But don't let anybody tell you that a reader is supposed to be solely on the receiving end. Understanding is a two-way operation; learning doesn't consist in being an empty receptacle. The learner has to question himself and question the teacher. He even has to argue with the teacher, once he understands what the teacher is saying. And marking a book is literally an expression of your differences, or agreements of opinion, with the author.

There are all kinds of devices for marking a book intelligently and fruitfully. Here's the way I do it:

1. *Underlining*: of major points, of important or forceful statements.
2. *Vertical lines at the margin*: to emphasize a statement already underlined.
3. *Star, asterisk, or other doo-dad at the margin*: to be used sparingly, to emphasize the ten or twenty most important statements in the book. (You may want to fold the bottom corner of each page on which you use such marks. It won't hurt the sturdy paper on which most modern books are printed, and you will be able to take the book off the shelf at any time and, by opening it at the folded-corner page, refresh your recollection of the book.)

4. *Numbers in the margin*: to indicate the sequence of points the author makes in developing a single argument.

5. *Numbers of other pages in the margin:* to indicate where else in the book the author made points relevant to the point marked; to tie up the ideas in a book, which, though they may be separated by many pages, belong together.

6. *Circling of key words or phrases.*

7. *Writing in the margin, or at the top or bottom of the page, for the sake of:* recording questions (and perhaps answers) which a passage raised in your mind; reducing a complicated discussion to a simple statement; recording the sequence of major points right through the book. I use the end-papers at the back of the book to make a personal index of the author's points in the order of their appearance.

The front end-papers are, to me, the most important. Some people reserve them for a fancy bookplate. I reserve them for fancy thinking. After I have finished reading the book and making my personal index on the back end-papers, I turn to the front and try to outline the book, not page by page, or point by point (I've already done that at the back), but as an integrated structure, with a basic unity and an order of parts. This outline is, to me, the measure of my understanding of the work.

If you're a die-hard anti-book-marker, you may object that the margins, the space between the lines, and the end-papers don't give you room enough. All right. How about using a scratch pad slightly smaller than the page-size of the book — so that the edges of the sheets won't protrude? Make your index, outlines, and even your notes on the pad, and then insert these sheets permanently inside the front and back covers of the book.

Or, you may say that this business of marking books is going to slow up your reading. It probably will. That's one of the reasons for doing it. Most of us have been taken in by the notion that speed of reading is a measure of our intelligence. There is no such thing as the right speed for intelligent reading. Some things should be read quickly and effortlessly, and some should be read slowly and even laboriously. The sign of intelligence in reading is the ability to read different things differently according to their worth. In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through you — how many you can make your own. A few friends are better than a thousand acquaintances. If this be your aim, as it should be, you will not be impatient if it takes more time and effort to read a great book than it does a newspaper.

You may have one final objection to marking books. You can't lend them to your friends because nobody else can read them without being distracted by your notes. Furthermore, you won't want to lend them because a marked copy is a kind of intellectual diary, and lending it is almost like giving your mind away.

If your friend wishes to read your "Plutarch's Lives," "Shakespeare," or "The Federalist Papers," tell him gently but firmly to buy a copy. You will lend

him your car or your coat — but your books are as much a part of you as your head or your heart.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is reading “actively”?
2. Find two good comparisons by which Adler clarifies his idea of making a book “a part of yourself.”
3. How might Adler’s seven devices for the intelligent marking of a book be useful to you in your college work?
4. What kinds of books should not be marked?

Virginia Woolf

## How Should One Read a Book?

*English novelist, critic, and essayist, Virginia Woolf was the center of a distinguished group of post World War I writers and artists living in Bloomsbury, London. In her fiction she rebelled against the solid structure of the Victorian novels and, under the influence of James Joyce and Proust, emphasized “the psychological minutiae of experience.” Her critical writing reveals the same lively imagination and delicate style as her best novels, Mrs. Dalloway (1925) and The Waves (1931). She died in 1941.*

In the first place, I want to emphasize the note of interrogation at the end of my title. Even if I could answer the question myself, the answer would apply only to me and not to you. The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions. If this is agreed between us, then I feel at liberty to put forward a few ideas and suggestions because you will not allow them to fetter that independence which is the most important quality that a reader can possess. After all, what laws can be laid down about books? The battle of Waterloo was certainly fought on a certain day; but is *Hamlet* a better play than *Lear*? Nobody can say. Each must decide that question for himself. To admit authorities, however heavily furred and gowned, into our

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libraries and let them tell us how to read, what to read, what value to place upon what we read, is to destroy the spirit of freedom which is the breath of those sanctuaries. Everywhere else we may be bound by laws and conventions — there we have none.

But to enjoy freedom, if the platitude is pardonable, we have of course to control ourselves. We must not squander our powers, helplessly and ignorantly, squirting half the house in order to water a single rose-bush; we must train them, exactly and powerfully, here on the very spot. This, it may be, is one of the first difficulties that faces us in a library. What is “the very spot”? There may well seem to be nothing but a conglomeration and huddle of confusion. Poems and novels, histories and memoirs, dictionaries and blue-books; books written in all languages by men and women of all tempers, races, and ages jostle each other on the shelf. And outside the donkey brays, the women gossip at the pump, the colts gallop across the fields. Where are we to begin? How are we to bring order into this multitudinous chaos and get the deepest and widest pleasure from what we read?

It is simple enough to say that since books have classes — fiction, biography, poetry — we should separate them and take from each what it is right that each should give us. Yet few people ask from books what books can give us. Most commonly we come to books with blurred and divided minds, asking of fiction that it shall be true, of poetry that it shall be false, of biography that it shall be flattering, of history that it shall enforce our own prejudices. If we could banish all such preconceptions when we read, that would be an admirable beginning. Do not dictate to your author; try to become him. Be his fellow-worker and accomplice. If you hang back, and reserve and criticize at first, you are preventing yourself from getting the fullest possible value from what you read. But if you open your mind as widely as possible, then signs and hints of almost imperceptible fineness, from the twist and turn of the first sentences, will bring you into the presence of a human being unlike any other. Steep yourself in this, acquaint yourself with this, and soon you will find that your author is giving you, or attempting to give you, something far more definite. The thirty-two chapters of a novel — if we consider how to read a novel first — are an attempt to make something as formed and controlled as a building; but words are more impalpable than bricks; reading is a longer and more complicated process than seeing. Perhaps the quickest way to understand the elements of what a novelist is doing is not to read, but to write; to make your own experiment with the dangers and difficulties of words. Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on you — how at the corner of the street, perhaps, you passed two people talking. A tree shook; an electric light danced; the tone of the talk was comic, but also tragic; a whole vision, an entire conception, seemed contained in that moment.

But when you attempt to reconstruct it in words, you will find that it breaks

into a thousand conflicting impressions. Some must be subdued; others emphasized; in the process you will lose, probably, all grasp upon the emotion itself. Then turn from your blurred and littered pages to the opening pages of some great novelist — Defoe, Jane Austen, Hardy. Now you will be better able to appreciate their mastery. It is not merely that we are in the presence of a different person — Defoe, Jane Austen, or Thomas Hardy — but that we are living in a different world. Here, in *Robinson Crusoe*, we are trudging a plain high road; one thing happens after another, the fact and the order of the fact is enough. But if the open air and adventure mean everything to Defoe they mean nothing to Jane Austen. Hers is the drawing-room, and people talking, and by the many mirrors of their talk revealing their characters. And if, when we have accustomed ourselves to the drawing-room and its reflections, we turn to Hardy, we are once more spun round. The moors are round us and the stars are above our heads. The other side of the mind is now exposed — the dark side that comes uppermost in solitude, not the light side that shows in company. Our relations are not towards people, but towards Nature and destiny. Yet different as these worlds are, each is consistent with itself. The maker of each is careful to observe the laws of his own perspective, and however great a strain they may put upon us they will never confuse us, as lesser writers so frequently do, by introducing two different kinds of reality into the same book. Thus to go from one great novelist to another — from Jane Austen to Hardy, from Peacock to Trollope, from Scott to Meredith — is to be wrenched and uprooted; to be thrown this way and then that. To read a novel is a difficult and complex art. You must be capable not only of great finesse of perception, but of great boldness of imagination if you are going to make use of all that the novelist — the great artist — gives you.

But a glance at the heterogeneous company on the shelf will show you that writers are very seldom “great artists”; far more often a book makes no claim to be a work of art at all. These biographies and autobiographies, for example, lives of great men, of men long dead and forgotten, that stand cheek by jowl with the novels and poems, are we to refuse to read them because they are not “art”? Or shall we read them, but read them in a different way, with a different aim? Shall we read them in the first place to satisfy that curiosity which possesses us sometimes when in the evening we linger in front of a house where the lights are lit and the blinds are not yet drawn, and each floor of the house shows us a different section of human life in being? Then we are consumed with curiosity about the lives of these people — the servants gossiping, the gentlemen dining, the girl dressing for a party, the old woman at the window with her knitting. Who are they, what are they, what are their names, their occupations, their thoughts, and adventures?

Biographies and memoirs answer such questions, light up innumerable such houses; they show us people going about their daily affairs, toiling, failing, suc-

ceeding, eating, hating, loving, until they die. And sometimes as we watch, the house fades and the iron railings vanish and we are out at sea; we are hunting, sailing, fighting; we are among savages and soldiers; we are taking part in great campaigns. Or if we like to stay here in England, in London, still the scene changes; the street narrows; the house becomes small, cramped, diamond-paned, and malodorous. We see a poet, Donne, driven from such a house because the walls were so thin that when the children cried their voices cut through them. We can follow him, through the paths that lie in the pages of books, to Twickenham; to Lady Bedford's Park, a famous meeting-ground for nobles and poets; and then turn our steps to Wilton, the great house under the downs, and hear Sidney read the *Arcadia* to his sister; and ramble among the very marshes and see the very herons that figure in that famous romance; and then again travel north with that other Lady Pembroke, Anne Clifford, to her wild moors, or plunge into the city and control our merriment at the sight of Gabriel Harvey in his black velvet suit arguing about poetry with Spenser. Nothing is more fascinating than to grope and stumble in the alternate darkness and splendour of Elizabethan London. But there is no staying there. The Temples and the Swifts, the Harleys and the St. Johns beckon us on; hour upon hour can be spent disentangling their quarrels and deciphering their characters; and when we tire of them we can stroll on, past a lady in black wearing diamonds, to Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith and Garrick; or cross the channel, if we like, and meet Voltaire and Diderot, Madame du Deffand; and so back to England and Twickenham -- how certain places repeat themselves and certain names! -- where Lady Bedford had her Park once and Pope lived later, to Walpole's home at Strawberry Hill. But Walpole introduces us to such a swarm of new acquaintances, there are so many houses to visit and bells to ring that we may well hesitate for a moment, on the Miss Berrys' doorstep, for example, when behold, up comes Thackeray; he is the friend of the woman whom Walpole loved; so that merely by going from friend to friend, from garden to garden, from house to house, we have passed from one end of English literature to another and wake to find ourselves here again in the present, if we can so differentiate this moment from all that have gone before. This, then, is one of the ways in which we can read these lives and letters; we can make them light up the many windows of the past; we can watch the famous dead in their familiar habits and fancy sometimes that we are very close and can surprise their secrets, and sometimes we may pull out a play or a poem that they have written and see whether it reads differently in the presence of the author. But this again rouses other questions. How far, we must ask ourselves, is a book influenced by its writer's life -- how far is it safe to let the man interpret the writer? How far shall we resist or give way to the sympathies and antipathies that the man himself rouses in us -- so sensitive are words, so receptive of the character of the author? These are questions that press upon us when we read lives and letters, and we must answer them

for ourselves, for nothing can be more fatal than to be guided by the preferences of others in a matter so personal.

But also we can read such books with another aim, not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers. Is there not an open window on the right hand of the bookcase? How delightful to stop reading and look out! How stimulating the scene is, in its unconsciousness, its irrelevance, its perpetual movement — the colts galloping round the field, the woman filling her pail at the well, the donkey throwing back his head and emitting his long, aerid moan. The greater part of any library is nothing but the record of such fleeting moments in the lives of men, women, and donkeys. Every literature, as it grows old, has its rubbish-heap, its record of vanished moments and forgotten lives told in faltering and feeble accents that have perished. But if you give yourself up to the delight of rubbish-reading you will be surprised, indeed you will be overcome, by the relics of human life that have been cast out to moulder. It may be one letter — but what a vision it gives! It may be a few sentences — but what vistas they suggest! Sometimes a whole story will come together with such beautiful humour and pathos and completeness that it seems as if a great novelist had been at work, yet it is only an old actor, Tate Wilkinson, remembering the strange story of Captain Jones; it is only a young subaltern serving under Arthur Wellesley and falling in love with a pretty girl at Lisbon; it is only Maria Allen letting fall her sewing in the empty drawing-room and sighing how she wishes she had taken Dr. Burney's good advice and had never eloped with her Rishy. None of this has any value; it is negligible in the extreme; yet how absorbing it is now and again to go through the rubbish-heaps and find rings and scissors and broken noses buried in the huge past and try to piece them together while the colt gallops round the field, the woman fills her pail at the well, and the donkey brays.

But we tire of rubbish-reading in the long run. We tire of searching for what is needed to complete the half-truth which is all that the Wilkinsons, the Bunburys, and the Maria Allens are able to offer us. They had not the artist's power of mastering and eliminating; they could not tell the whole truth even about their own lives; they have disfigured the story that might have been so shapely. Facts are all that they can offer us, and facts are a very inferior form of fiction. Thus the desire grows upon us to have done with half-statements and approximations; to cease from searching out the minute shades of human character, to enjoy the greater abstractness, the purer truth of fiction. Thus we create the mood, intense and generalised, unaware of detail, but stressed by some regular, recurrent beat, whose natural expression is poetry; and that is the time to read poetry when we are almost able to write it.

Western wind, when wilt thou blow?  
The small rain down can rain.  
Christ, if my love were in my arms,  
And I in my bed again!



The impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation except that of the poem itself. What profound depths we visit then — how sudden and complete is our immersion! There is nothing here to catch hold of; nothing to stay us in our flight. The illusion of fiction is gradual; its effects are prepared; but who when they read these four lines stops to ask who wrote them, or conjures up the thought of Donne's house or Sidney's secretary; or enmeshes them in the intricacy of the past and the succession of generations? The poet is always our contemporary. Our being for the moment is centred and constricted, as in any violent shock of personal emotion. Afterwards, it is true, the sensation begins to spread in wider rings through our minds; remoter senses are reached; these begin to sound and to comment and we are aware of echoes and reflections. The intensity of poetry covers an immense range of emotion. We have only to compare the force and directness of

I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,  
Only remembering that I grieve,

with the wavering modulation of

Minutes are numbered by the fall of sands,  
As by an hour glass; the span of time  
Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it;  
An age of pleasure, revelled out, comes home  
At last, and ends in sorrow; but the life,  
Weary of riot, numbers every sand,  
Wailing in sighs, until the last drop down,  
So to conclude calamity in rest,

or place the meditative calm of

whether we be young or old,  
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,  
Is with infinitude, and only there;  
With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
Effort, and expectation, and desire,  
And something evermore about to be,

beside the complete and inexhaustible loveliness of

The moving Moon went up the sky,  
And no where did abide:  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside —

or the splendid fantasy of

And the woodland haunter  
Shall not cease to saunter  
When, far down some glade,  
Of the great world's burning,  
One soft flame upturning  
Seems, to his discerning,  
Crocus in the shade.

to bethink us of the varied art of the poet; his power to make us at once actors and spectators; his power to run his hand into character as if it were a glove, and be Falstaff or Lear; his power to condense, to widen, to state, once and for ever.

"We have only to compare" — with those words the cat is out of the bag, and the true complexity of reading is admitted. The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading; it must be completed, if we are to get the whole pleasure from a book, by another. We must pass judgment upon these multitudinous impressions; we must make of these fleeting shapes one that is hard and lasting. But not directly. Wait for the dust of reading to settle; for the conflict and the questioning to die down; walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently. It will float to the top of the mind as a whole. And the book as a whole is different from the book received currently in separate phrases. Details now fit themselves into their places. We see the shape from start to finish; it is a barn, a pig-sty, or a cathedral. Now then we can compare book with book as we compare building with building. But this act of comparison means that our attitude has changed; we are no longer the friends of the writer, but his judges; and just as we cannot be too sympathetic as friends, so as judges we cannot be too severe. Are they not criminals, books that have wasted our time and sympathy; are they not the most insidious enemies of society, corrupters, defilers, the writers of false books, faked books, books that fill the air with decay and disease? Let us then be severe in our judgments; let us compare each book with the greatest of its kind. There they hang in the mind the shapes of the books we have read solidified by the judgments we have passed on them — *Robinson Crusoe*, *Emma*, *The Return of the Native*. Compare the novels with these — even the latest and least of novels has a right to be judged with the best. And so with poetry — when the intoxication of rhythm has died down and the splendour of words has faded a visionary shape will return to us and this must be compared with *Lear*, with *Phèdre*, with *The Prelude*; or if not with these, with whatever is the best or seems to us to be the best in its own kind. And we may be sure that the newness of new poetry and fiction is its most superficial quality and that we have only to alter slightly, not to recast, the standards by which we have judged the old.

It would be foolish, then, to pretend that the second part of reading, to judge, to compare, is as simple as the first — to open the mind wide to the fast flocking of innumerable impressions. To continue reading without the book before you, to hold one shadow-shape against another, to have read widely enough and with enough understanding to make such comparisons alive and illuminating — that is difficult; it is still more difficult to press further and to say, "Not only is the book of this sort, but it is of this value; here it fails; here it succeeds; this is bad; this is good." To carry out this part of a reader's duty

needs such imagination, insight, and learning that it is hard to conceive any one mind sufficiently endowed; impossible for the most self-confident to find more than the seeds of such powers in himself. Would it not be wiser, then, to remit this part of reading and to allow the critics, the gowned and furred authorities of the library, to decide the question of the book's absolute value for us? Yet how impossible! We may stress the value of sympathy; we may try to sink our own identity as we read. But we know that we cannot sympathise wholly or immerse ourselves wholly; there is always a demon in us who whispers, "I hate, I love," and we cannot silence him. Indeed, it is precisely because we hate and we love that our relation with the poets and novelists is so intimate that we find the presence of another person intolerable. And even if the results are abhorrent and our judgments are wrong, still our taste, the nerve of sensation that sends shocks through us, is our chief illuminant; we learn through feeling; we cannot suppress our own idiosyncrasy without impoverishing it. But as time goes on perhaps we can train our taste; perhaps we can make it submit to some control. When it has fed greedily and lavishly upon books of all sorts — poetry, fiction, history, biography — and has stopped reading and looked for long spaces upon the variety, the incongruity of the living world, we shall find that it is changing a little; it is not so greedy, it is more reflective. It will begin to bring us not merely judgments on particular books, but it will tell us that there is a quality common to certain books. Listen, it will say, what shall we call *this*? And it will read us perhaps *Lear* and then perhaps the *Agamemnon* in order to bring out that common quality. Thus, with our taste to guide us, we shall venture beyond the particular book in search of qualities that group books together; we shall give them names and thus frame a rule that brings order into our perceptions. We shall gain a further and a rarer pleasure from that discrimination. But as a rule only lives when it is perpetually broken by contact with the books themselves — nothing is easier and more stultifying than to make rules which exist out of touch with facts, in a vacuum — now at last, in order to steady ourselves in this difficult attempt, it may be well to turn to the very rare writers who are able to enlighten us upon literature as an art. Coleridge and Dryden and Johnson, in their considered criticism, the poets and novelists themselves in their unconsidered sayings, are often surprisingly relevant; they light up and solidify the vague ideas that have been tumbling in the misty depths of our minds. But they are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading. They can do nothing for us if we herd ourselves under their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge. We can only understand their ruling when it comes in conflict with our own and vanquishes it.

If this is so, if to read a book as it should be read calls for the rarest qualities of imagination, insight, and judgment, you may perhaps conclude that literature is a very complex art and that it is unlikely that we shall be able, even after a

lifetime of reading, to make any valuable contribution to its criticism. We must remain readers; we shall not put on the further glory that belongs to those rare beings who are also critics. But still we have our responsibilities as readers and even our importance. The standards we raise and the judgments we pass steal into the air and become part of the atmosphere which writers breathe as they work. An influence is created which tells upon them even if it never finds its way into print. And that influence, if it were well instructed, vigorous and individual and sincere, might be of great value now when criticism is necessarily in abeyance; when books pass in review like the procession of animals in a shooting gallery, and the critic has only one second in which to load and aim and shoot and may well be pardoned if he mistakes rabbits for tigers, eagles for barn-door fowls, or misses altogether and wastes his shot upon some peaceful cow grazing in a further field. If behind the erratic gunfire of the press the author felt that there was another kind of criticism, the opinion of people reading for the love of reading, slowly and unprofessionally, and judging with great sympathy and yet with great severity, might this not improve the quality of his work? And if by our means books were to become stronger, richer, and more varied, that would be an end worth reaching.

Yet who reads to bring about an end however desirable? Are there not some pursuits that we practise because they are good in themselves, and some pleasures that are final? And is not this among them? I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards — their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble — the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, “Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.”

#### QUESTIONS

1. List at least three purposes or aims in reading which Virginia Woolf discusses.
2. How can you best understand what a novelist is trying to do?
3. What kind of pleasure do you anticipate when you read poetry? biography? a great novel? a comic strip?
4. Should every reader be a critic? <sup>1</sup>Name three great critics cited by Virginia Woolf.
5. What does Virginia Woolf believe about literary taste? What should one read?

*"Personally, I would rather have written Alice in Wonderland than the whole Encyclopaedia Britannica," said Stephen Leacock, beloved Canadian humorist. Very like Lewis Carroll, the mathematician, he was Professor of Political Economy at McGill University and author of learned treatises in his field, but he is remembered for his humor. His most famous character is the young lover of Nonsense Novels (1911), who became so confused that he mounted his horse "and rode madly off in all directions."*

The bygone humorist Bill Nye once inserted in his column of Answers to Correspondents an enthusiastic item which read, "You write a splendid hand, you ought to write for the papers." The wilful confusion of mind as to what writing means is very funny. But the confusion is no hazier than that of many young people who "want to write." Bill Nye would have told them that the best writing is done straight from the elbow. It is the purpose of this book to show that it originates in the brain. Writing is thinking. . . .

It is worth while to make this reference to the ability to write, to the mechanical art of writing and its relative rarity in bygone times, and indeed till yesterday. For to this fact is partly due the rather distorted view frequently taken as to what writing means. It is still thought of as if it meant stringing words together, whereas in reality the main part of it is "thinking." People don't realize this. A student says "I want to write"; he never says "I want to think." Indeed, nobody deliberately wants to think except the heroine in a problem play, who frequently gasps out "I must *think*," a view fully endorsed by the spectators. "Let me *think*!" she says; indeed she probably has to go away, to the Riviera, "to think." When she comes back we learn that she is now looking for some way to "stop thinking" — to prevent her from going mad.

Here and there perhaps are a few other cases of the desire to think. There is a famous statue by Rodin, a statue of a primitive man — with a massive jaw and narrow forehead — seated with his head in his hands, his gaze fixed, his face rigid with an effort towards something still beyond his primitive powers. Yet in his fixed gaze is the hope of the centuries. Rodin called his figure "The Thinker." Yet he might equally well have called him "The Writer," or even "The Editor" — or no, perhaps not the Editor; he's different.

Take another random illustration. We find in Tennyson's works a poem dealing with the rural England of his day in which a farmer, in urging a marriage on his son, says, "Consider, William; take a month to think." Tennyson's

accurate knowledge of the English countryside has been much admired. He probably timed this to a day. The advice would have been equally appropriate if William had been wanting to write.

. . . . .

So then, one wants to "write," and that means to have, or get, ideas that are so interesting that if fully converted into words people want to read them — and will even (though we must pretend to forget that) pay money to read them. So the first inquiry is, How do you see about it to get ideas? Hence arises the question whether we get ideas by looking for them or by not looking for them; that is, by happening to be looking in another direction when they come along. In other words, is what is wanted in writing patient effort and conscientious industry? Or native genius and happy chance? This doesn't seem much of a question at first sight. But in reality it underlies all the discussion of how to write. John Stuart Mill once laid down a proposition so simple that it would require an idiot to deny it, namely that if you cultivate a piece of land more and more and better and better there comes a time when it isn't worth while to cultivate it better still. Having laid down this obvious truth, Mill declared it the most important proposition in Political Economy.

So with the question of whether to write by work or by inspiration. How *can* you be a writer by trying to be? You either are or you are not. "Poets," said the Romans, "are born, not made." So might you be inclined to believe till there comes the afterthought about the "mute inglorious Miltons" buried in the country churchyard, or the wish that you had seized and expressed the thoughts that have sometimes come to you, as you might have done if you had cultivated the power of expression.

We repeat then, Do *we*, or let us say, do authors, get ideas to write about by looking for them, or by looking in some other direction? There is no doubt that many things in life come to us by this latter process, at back rounds, so to speak. Happiness is one of them. Try to buy it, either by the yard (of dress) or by the quart (of champagne) and it slips away. Motion it aside while you are busy with duty and it will be there at your elbow.

I have often been struck by the width of the application of this principle. It is not possible to be a genial man by trying to, nor a dignified man, nor any other kind of man except the kind of man you really are. Yet there is also the contrary principle of the value of conscious effort. If we try hard to be or do something, not native to us, we may perhaps turn into something, or effect something, different but better. The man unsuccessfully attempting to be genial is at least pathetic and likable for his attempt.

Hence, when we turn to writing and literary work we find the same contrast between unsought effects and deliberate effort. Many writers, including poets, like to think, as we have said above, that a thing "comes to them," especially

to have it come to them "in the woods" or "in the crowded mart" or in "the silent hours of the night." It seems bigger stuff than to have to go to it, or to have it arrive just after dinner. Our word "inspiration" embodies and elevates this idea. No doubt there is a sense in which ideas once started seem to develop themselves, in which a story falls into its place, effortless and inevitable.

But it is also true that writers, in the mass, would never get far without a great deal of deliberate effort, of conscious pursuit of an idea, of constant practise in suiting words to thought. My own experience has been confined to two fields, both of them aside from the main body of imaginative writing. I can therefore speak from personal experience only of a limited scope. It has been my lot to write a great deal of historical and political stuff, in which imagination only figures as the paint upon the gingerbread — the art of using language to interest and embellish thought. It would insult a historian to ask if he got his facts out of his own head.

But in my other small field, that of humorous writing, I think I know what I am talking about. A humorous *idea* that becomes the basis of a talk or story, most usually starts with some small casual incongruity of fact or language that crops up in ordinary life. A mind of a certain native angle of vision will see it where others don't, just as a hunter sees half-hidden game that others would pass unnoticed. A mind trained by practise to expression finds means to turn such small incongruity into something broad and visible, dragging after it perhaps a sequence.

For this, it seems to me, two things are needed — the native ability and the discipline of training. I believe that Horace has already thought of this — as of much else that I write — in saying *Doctrina vim promovet insitam*. (*Study calls out native power*.) I could give innumerable examples of this native genius for vision into the incongruities of *language*, or incongruities of fact. Robert Benchley, for example, sits down to write on India. He begins: "India! what mysteries does the name not suggest?" Ordinary people wouldn't see that anything has happened. But Benchley notes the incongruity of our language, when we ask, "What does it *not* do?" to mean that it does everything. Obviously, there are lots of mysteries that India does not suggest, says Benchley, such as the mystery of the lost Charlie Ross.

Or take again a case from the work of the late Harry Graham. He talks of a country gentleman improving his house by putting in a billiard room which meant throwing the smoking room into the gun room. . . . Many people could live beside this phrase, fast asleep. Not so Harry Graham. He sees at once the opportunity, as would no doubt any reader of these lines. But the ordinary reader might give a laugh to the phrase and yet he couldn't "carry on" with it as Harry Graham does, when he proceeds to throw the gun room into the dining room — a necessary consequence of the first throw — and then the butler's pantry into the scullery — and so on — till the whole place is a wreck.

So much for native ability to seize an opportunity that comes by chance. But what are we to say of the writer who sits down and struggles, even agonizes, to get something funny to write? Here we have Mr. A. A. Milne, whose native ability is at the saturation point, telling us in his autobiography of such struggles and agonies when he had to turn out his copy, week by week, for *Punch*. This seems very different from accident or inspiration. In reality, it is just the same thing. What Mr. Milne, and lesser people, are doing in this brute effort at being funny, is to run over in mental visions scenes and people with an eye and an ear on the watch. Something half-perceived and subconsciously recorded is there as obvious as a partridge sitting on a bough. We have only to fire with both barrels. It may not be "sportsmanlike," in comparison with inspiration, but it gets the bird. Which leads us to the conclusion that getting ideas to write is much the same mixture of effort and accident as make, in general, the cross threads of the web of life.

. . . . .

We have decided then that writing has got to be done deliberately. We can't wait for it to come. On these terms, I claim that anybody can learn to write, just as anybody can learn to swim. Nor can anybody swim without learning how. A person can thus learn to swim up to the limits imposed by his aptitude and physique. The final result may not be worth looking at, but he can swim. So with writing. Nobody can learn to write without having learned how, either consciously or unconsciously. But it fortunately happens that what we call our education supplies to all of us the first basis for writing, the ability to read and to spell. Indeed our ordinary education, even in any elementary school, gives us a certain training in putting words together. Under the name of "composition" we go through a harrowing set of little exercises in correcting errors in the use of English; we put poetry back into prose, and go as far as to reach up to writing a composition on *An Autumn Walk*, or *The Fidelity of the Dog*. This is not "writing" in the sense adopted in this book but it is as essential a preliminary o it as learning to drive a nail into a board is to carpentry. People of exceptional native ability and no schooling sometimes write, and sometimes have reached great eminence without such training. But that is because the bent of their minds was so strong in that direction that unconsciously they weighed and measured words and phrases, fascinated with the power of expression, as an artistic genius, a young Giotto, with the pictured line.

Indeed, an ordinary environment of today gives us an even further start, and nowadays our sight and hearing, through moving pictures, introduces us to a vast world of history, of actual events, and imaginary stories. These and the little circumstances of our own life give us plenty of material for thought. If we put our thoughts into words and write them down, that is *writing*. There's no more to it. It's just as simple as that.



In other words, anybody can write who has something to say and knows how to say it. Contrariwise, nobody can write who has nothing to say, or nothing that he can put into words.

Now it so happens that most of us have a good deal to say, but when we try to turn it into writing it gets muddled up by all kinds of preconceived ideas of how writing should be done, or is done by other people. So much so that when we write anything down it sounds false from start to finish. Each one of us is the custodian of *one* first class story, the story of his own life. Every human life is a story — is interesting if it can be conveyed. The poet Gray wrote down the “short and simple annals of the poor” sleeping under the elm trees of a country churchyard, with such pathos and interest that they have lasted nearly two hundred years. But the poor couldn’t have done it for themselves. Neither can we. We can’t surround the story of our life with the majestic diction and the music of Gray’s *Elegy*. But it is interesting, just the same, if we can tell it. Have you never noticed how at times people begin to tell you of their early life and early difficulties, and tell it utterly without affectation or effort, and how interesting it is in such form? Like this:

*Our farm was fifteen miles from a high school and it was too far to walk, and I didn’t see how I could manage to go, and I couldn’t have, but Uncle Al (he was the one who had gone out West) heard about it and he sent me fifty dollars and I started. I boarded Monday to Friday and walked home Fridays after school . . . and so forth.*

That’s the way the man talks in an unguarded moment. But set him down to write out his life and see what happens. Either he sits and chews his pen and can’t start, or he writes — with the result a hopeless artificiality. The same facts are there but dressed with a false adornment like ribbons on a beggar’s coat. Something like this: *Our farm was situated some ten miles from the nearest emporium of learning, to wit, a high school, a distance beyond the range of Shanks’ mare, the only vehicle within reach of my, or my family’s, pecuniary resources . . . etc., etc.*

This failure happens because the man in question has been, unknowingly, taught how not to write. The necessarily somewhat artificial training of the school-room has led him unconsciously to think of writing as something elevated above ordinary speaking — like company manners. This knocks out at once the peculiar quality of “sincerity” which is the very soul of literature. “Sincerity” is the nearest word for what is meant; it implies not exactly honesty but a direct relation, a sort of inevitable relation as between the words used and the things narrated. This is the peculiar quality of many of the great writers who wrote without trying to write. Caesar wrote like this and John Bunyan, and better than all as an example is the matchless, simple-Greek of the New Testament as put before us by King James’s translators . . . *They were all with one accord in one place . . . and suddenly there came the sound as of a rushing mighty wind. Or again: And they said “Behold! There is a lad here that hath five barley*

*loaves and three small fishes, but what are they among so many?" And he said, "Make the men sit down." And the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And there was much grass in the place . . .*

Now we can see from this the difficulty so many young people find when they try to "practise" writing. They are suddenly attempting to be someone else. Thus it often happens that when the conscious age of trying to write begins, young people use their correspondence with their friends as a form of practise. Ebenezer Smith, let us say, writes from Temagami camp a letter to a friend. Hitherto he had just written letters straight off, after this fashion: *We got the canoes into the water about five o'clock, just after the sun rose. The lake was dead calm and we paddled down to the portage in half an hour. I never saw the lake so calm.* But suddenly Ebenezer becomes sophisticated and when he sits down to write, the result is such a passage as this:

*A clear morning with just a faint sheen of mist before the sun kissed it away. I watched it vanish from the still surface of the lake and thought it seemed like some thin cerement, reverently drawn from the still face of death.* Oh, no, you didn't, Ebenezer! You thought that afterwards; stick to the canoe and portage stuff. It's more like Xenophon.

This collapse of Ebenezer Smith's correspondence as a method of beginning to write, leaves us still with the problem, how *do* you begin anyway? Where do you get the start and the practise?

We have just said that the ordinary education of the great mass of people, who go to school but don't go to college, supplies them with at least a sort of elementary beginning in "composition," in the expression of thought in words. What they get is at least something; indeed it is much. But it is mainly negative. It says what not to do. It tells them what errors to avoid. But you can't avoid anything if you are writing nothing. You must write first and "avoid" afterwards. A writer is in no danger of splitting an infinitive if he has no infinitive to split.

It might, therefore, be thought that in order to become a writer it is necessary to go on from school to college, and learn the "real stuff." Fortunately for the world at large this is not true. To go to college may be helpful but it is certainly not necessary. Writing is a thing which, sooner or later, one must do for oneself, of one's own initiative and energy. Those who are debarred from the privilege of attending college may take courage. The college kills writers as well as makes them. It is true that a gifted professor can do a lot; he can show the way, can explain what are the things in literature that the world has found great and why, in his opinion, they are so. Better still, he can communicate his own enthusiasm, and even exalt his pupils on the wings of his own conceit. More than that, the college gives companionship in study; it is hard to work alone, harder still to enjoy. Appreciation grows the more it is divided.

But as against all that, college training carries the danger of standardized

judgments, of affected admiration, of the pedantry of learning. Students read with one eye, or both, on the examination, classify and memorize and annotate till they have exchanged the warm pulsation of life for the *post-mortem* of an inquest.

But the main point is that writing, whether done in and by college or without a college, has got to be done for and by oneself. If you want to write, start and write down your thoughts. If you haven't any thoughts, don't write them down. But if you have, *write* them down; thoughts about anything, no matter what, in your own way, with no idea of selling them or being an author. Just put down your thoughts. If later on it turns out that your thoughts are interesting and if you get enough practise to be able to set down what they really are in language that conveys them properly — the selling business comes itself. There are many things in life, as we have said, that come to us as it were "at back rounds." Look for happiness and you find dust. Look for "authorship" and you won't find it; look for self-expression in words, for its own sake, and an editor's check will rustle down from Heaven on your table. Of course you really *hoped* for it; but you won't get it unless and until self-expression for its own sake breaks through.

What do you write about? You write about anything. Your great difficulty will be, as soon as you apprehend this method, that you can *think* things but can't say them. Most people live and die in that state; their conversation is stuffed with smothered thought that can't get over.

Take an example: Two people are walking out with the crowd from the roar and racket of a football game, just over. One says, "I don't know that I quite believe in all that rooting stuff, eh?" And the other answers, reflectively, "Oh, I don't know; I'm not so sure." That's as far as they can get. What the first man means is that organized hysteria is a poor substitute for spontaneous enthusiasm; and what the other means is that after all even genuine enthusiasm *unless* organized, unless given the aid of regularity and system — even spontaneous enthusiasm degenerates into confusion; our life, itself artificial, compels a certain "organization." They can't say this, but either of these two spectators would read with pleasure a well-written magazine article under such a title as *Should Rooting Be Rooted Out?* The articles we think really good are those that express the things that we think but can't say. . . .

#### QUESTIONS

1. Which is more important in writing, inspiration or perspiration?
2. Explain Horace's maxim: "Study calls out native power."<sup>1</sup>
3. What is meant by "sincerity" in writing?
4. Is the language of good writing somewhat elevated above that of ordinary speaking?

Robert Graves and Alan Hodge

## The Reader Over Your Shoulder

*Robert Graves is an English poet and novelist who dislikes "the antipoetic world of commerce and bureaucracy," and has lived much of his life on the Spanish island of Majorca. His autobiography, Good-bye to All That (1930), describes his early life and experiences as a captain in the First World War. His historical novel I, Claudius (1934) is considered one of the best of that type written in the twentieth century. Alan Hodge, young English author, collaborated with Robert Graves in a social history of the period between World Wars, The Long Week End (1941), as well as in The Reader Over Your Shoulder.*

There is an instinctive mistrust of grammarians in Britain and the United States, and a pride in following one's natural course in writing. Deliberate obscurity is rare. We suggest that whenever anyone sits down to write he should imagine a crowd of his prospective readers (rather than a grammarian in cap and gown) looking over his shoulder. They will be asking such questions as: "What does this sentence mean?" "Why do you trouble to tell me that again?" "Why have you chosen such a ridiculous metaphor?" "Must I really read this long, limping sentence?" "Haven't you got your ideas muddled here?" By anticipating and listing as many questions of this sort as possible, the writer will discover certain tests of intelligibility to which he may regularly submit his work before he sends it off to the printer.

No writer should fail to reckon with modern reading habits. As each year until the fall of France more and more reading matter was obtruded on people's notice, they had to protect themselves in some way from having their whole leisure time engrossed by it. How much of the averagely interesting book is actually read nowadays by the averagely interested person? It can only be a small part, and of that small part a good deal is lost because, though the eye goes through the motions of reading, the mind does not necessarily register the sense. Even when a book is being read with the most literal attention — a fair example is proof-reading by the author, his friends and members of the publishing firm and printing house — scores of errors pass undetected.<sup>1</sup>

It is not that modern people are less intelligent than their grandparents:

From Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, *The Reader Over Your Shoulder*, Chapter II. Copyright 1943 by Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, and used with The Macmillan Company's permission.

<sup>1</sup> Why so many well-educated people spell badly is because they were quick-brained as children and learned to take in two or three words at a time, before going to school and learning exceptions to the ordinary spelling rules. Thus they may never, since nursery days, have read a word which they habitually mis-spell (though they may come across it twenty times a week); but see it as they think it should be. We have found 'Aircraftman' spelt correctly only once in American journals against the scores of times we have seen it spelt 'Aircraftsman'.

only that, being busier, they are less careful. They must learn to take short cuts, skimming through the columns of a newspaper, flicking over the pages of a book or magazine, deciding at each new paragraph or page whether to read it either attentively or cursorily, or whether to let it go unread. There is a running commentary in the mind. For example, in reading a *Life of Napoleon*: "page 9 . . . yes, he is still talking about Napoleon's childhood and the romantic scenery of Corsica . . . something about James Boswell and Corsican independence . . . tradition of banditry . . . now back to the family origins again . . . wait a minute . . . no . . . his mother . . . more about her . . . yes . . . French Revolution . . . page 24, more about the French Revolution . . . still more . . . page 31, not interested . . . ah . . . Chapter 2, now he's at the military school . . . I can begin here . . . but oughtn't to waste time over this early part . . . in the artillery, was he? . . . but when do we get to the Italian campaign?" And even when the reader does get to the Italian campaign and settles down comfortably to the story, he seldom reads a sentence through, word by word. Usually, he takes it in either with a single comprehensive glance as he would a stream or a field of cows that he was passing in the train, or with a series of glances, four or five words to a glance. And unless he has some special reason for studying the narrative closely, or is in an unusually industrious mood, he will not trouble about any tactical and geographical niceties of the campaign that are not presented with lively emphasis and perfect clarity. And, more serious still from the author's point of view, he will not stop when the eye is checked by some obscurity or fancifulness of language, but will leave the point unresolved and pass on. If there are many such obstructions he will skim over them until his eye alights on a clear passage again.

Imaginative readers rewrite books to suit their own taste, omitting and mentally altering as they read. And most readers automatically correct obvious errors in sense as well as misprints. Such a slip as "Cain's murder by Abel did not go unavenged" would almost certainly pass unnoticed by every reader who was familiar from childhood with the Bible story; he would read it as "Cain's murder of Abel" or "Abel's murder by Cain." And if some Hebrew scholar perhaps wished to report an alternative legend in which it was Cain, not Abel, who was murdered, this point would have to be underscored emphatically before educated people could be expected to read the story correctly. Writers who use such unfamiliar words as "aerobat," "comport," "dietic," "sublimination" find them so often altered by typists and printers into "acrobat," "comfort," "dietetic" and "sublimation" that most readers may be presumed to do the same in their minds. The old catch of asking someone to repeat the verse:

Tobacco, Tobacco, Tobacco!  
When you're sick it makes you well,  
And it makes you well when you're sick,  
Tobacco, Tobacco, Tobacco!

is to the point here. Nine intelligent people out of ten will reverse the order of the words in the third line, to change the repetition into an antithesis:

And when you're well it makes you sick.

We do not suggest that writers should indulge busy readers by writing down to them — giving them nothing but short messages simply phrased; but only that sentences and paragraphs should follow one another so easily and inevitably, and with such economy of phrase, that a reader will have no encouragement to skip.

There is a hasty way of writing which is a counterpart to the hasty way of reading. It is becoming more common every year and raising less and less protest. A speech, or an article, has to be written by a certain day; there are the usual interruptions and distractions. The writer is hurried but confident, with a fairly clear notion of what he wants to say. He dashes down or dictates a first draft, reads it through quickly, or has it read back to him, makes a few verbal alterations, calls it done and immediately turns to some other business. The greater the haste in which the draft is written, the closer will it come to his ordinary conversational style; and will therefore have a certain intimate charm of expression, unless of course he has trained himself to think wholly in clichés. But it is likely to contain repetitions, contradictions, muddled sequences of ideas, dropped threads, hastily chosen phrases, irrelevancies, queer variations of tense and case — especially when he is writing on a topic new to him and not merely repeating his own or someone else's remembered phrases. And phrases that seemed good enough to him in his haste — useful stand-ins for the star phrases he could not quite command — will often not only fail to convey a particular meaning to the reader but will make a blank of the whole passage.

It is not only single words and phrases that are used as stand-ins. Someone is asked, perhaps, for an article on the Rebuilding of London, or on God and the War, or on the German National Character. He has probably two or three quite good points to make but feels that an article of this sort needs a general philosophical or historical setting. He is himself neither a philosopher nor a historian and has therefore to vamp out a rhetorical introduction and conclusion. The busy eye, reading such an article, understandingly discounts the stand-in paragraphs and goes straight for the points, which in the popular press are often considerably printed in heavy type; but, in doing so, is liable to miss whatever of importance may be embedded in the rhetoric.

In spoken English haste has been the chief cause of the increasing confusion. People in important positions use a ragged conversational style that in the leisured Eighties would have been attributed to drink, mental decay or vicious upbringing. The rank and file have followed suit. The tempo of life in the United States of America is faster than in Britain and conversational looseness in Congress has been carried further than in the Houses of Parliament. The

haywire innovations <sup>2</sup> of conversational English — not merely the slang vocabulary but the logical confusion — have worked their way into literary prose, chiefly because the growing prejudice against academic writing as pompous and sterile of ideas tempts writers to disguise their commonplaces.

Probably the habit of dictation to a typist has been responsible for a good deal of the confusion. Business and official letters and reports were once drafted by the person responsible and then, after careful emendation, given to a junior clerk for copying. They are now dictated to a shorthand typist (whose chief recommendation is usually her speed) and very often are not even read back before they are typed. Few people are capable of composing a difficult report or letter so that all the sentences of a paragraph are neatly related, unless they write it out for themselves and are able constantly to glance up and down the page, altering and erasing. Sometimes the typist is not only part of the office-equipment but an audience: the employer will wish to give an impression of fluency and infallibility rather than fumble and fuss over words. Though nine letters out of ten write themselves, their subjects being so familiar and their phrasing so formalized, the tenth, which deals with an unusual case, will present a literary problem from which there is no escape even with the business-man's lifebelt "Comma, on the basis of which" and his breeches-buoy "Paragraph, under the circumstances, therefore." The employer blusters through somehow; the efficient typist quickly reduces the muddle to a clear page of typescript; and it then acquires so authoritative a look that it is usually signed and sent off without emendation. . . .

To haste as a cause of confusion must be added distraction. Normally, except for those who work in the early hours of the morning, or who live up a long country lane, it is almost impossible to avoid being disturbed by incidental noises of traffic, industry, schools, and the wireless, or by the telephone, or by callers. Few people can immediately switch their mind from one complicated subject to another, and presently switch back again, without losing something in the process. Most business men and journalists claim that they are accustomed to noise and can "work through anything." But this does not mean that they are not affected by noise: part of the brain must be employed in sorting out the noises and discounting them. The intense concentration achieved when one writes in complete silence, security and leisure, with the mental senses cognizant of every possible aspect of the theme as it develops — this was always rare and is now rarer than ever. Modern conditions of living encourage habitual distraction and, though there are still opportunities for comparative quiet, most people feel that they are not really alive unless they are in close touch with their fellow men — and close touch involves constant disturbance. Hart Crane, a leading

<sup>2</sup> To appreciate the force of "haywire" one must have seen the confusion caused in an American hayfield when the wire cable, intended to secure a huge stack against tornadoes, has slipped and tangled itself in coils among the fallen hay and the haymakers.

American poet of the Nineteen-Twenties, decided that he could not write his best except with a radio or victrola playing jazz at him and street-noises coming up through the open window. He considered that distraction was the chief principle of modern living; he cultivated it, distractedly, and committed suicide in his early thirties.

A third general cause of confusion has been timidity. A fear of feeling definitely committed to any statement that might cause trouble or inconvenience seems to haunt almost everyone in Britain who holds a public position, however unimportant.

A fourth cause of confusion has been dividedness of mind. When people have to write from a point of view which is not really their own, they are apt to betray this by hedging, blustering, an uneasy choice of words, a syntactical looseness. We mean, for example, Cabinet Ministers expressing the view of a Cabinet from which they have often considered resigning; priests, assailed by honest doubt, who must continue to enunciate church dogma; Communists uneasily following the party-line; officials relaying to the public some order from headquarters of which they disapprove; critics borrowing aesthetic standards not properly understood.

British writers excel in straightforward narrative, once they have finished their introductory generalizations and got into their narrative stride. But they tend to be embarrassed by any autobiographical element. What was a rhetorical device in the Classical schools of oratory — *meiosis* or under-emphasis — and came into facetious use in Victorian times (e.g., "Pedestrianism in November is a matter of not a little unpleasantness"), is now second nature to most Englishmen, and has lost its original ironic purpose. It now means modesty: "At four thousand I ran into a spot of bother — a couple of Ju.88s who dived at me from a cloud and one of them didn't do my port engine any too much good, but I managed to put paid to him — the crew baled out — and then I watched the other go down in bits and pieces — not a pretty sight — well, I met a passing Messerschmidt on the way home . . ." Conversationally this style can be charming, but in prose it makes for irrelevancy, material omission, faulty connexion, logical weakness and, eventually, boredom.

There is no natural safeguard in the English language against the faults of haste, distraction, timidity, dividedness of mind, modesty. English does not run on its own rails, as French does, with a simply managed mechanism of knobs and levers, so that any army officer or provincial mayor can always, at a minute's notice, glide into a graceful speech in celebration of any local or national event, however unexpected. The fact is, that English has altogether too many resources for the ordinary person, and nobody holds it against him if he speaks or writes badly. The only English dictionary with any pretension to completeness as a collection of literary precedents, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is of the size and price of an encyclopedia; and pocket-dictionaries do not distinguish suffi-



ciently between shades of meaning in closely associated words: for example, between the adjectives "silvery," "silvern," "silver," "silvered," "argent," "argentine," "argentic," "argentous." Just as all practising lawyers have ready access to a complete legal library, so all professional writers (and every other writer who can afford it) should possess or have ready access to the big *Oxford English Dictionary*. But how many trouble about the real meanings of words? Most of them are content to rub along with a Thesaurus — which lumps words together in groups of so-called synonyms, without definitions — and an octavo dictionary. One would not expect a barrister to prepare a complicated insurance or testamentary case with only *Everyman's Handy Guide to the Law* to help him; and there are very few books which one can write decently without consulting at every few pages a dictionary of at least two quarto volumes — *Webster's*, or the shorter *Oxford English Dictionary* — to make sure of a word's antecedents and meaning.

To write English perfectly is impossible in practice: occasional ambiguities or slight improprieties of phrase are discoverable in every book — there has never been a writer who did not have some blind spot in his reading eye. Even to write it well is difficult. The alternative chosen by those who cannot carry on their daily business without constantly writing reports, demands and orders is a dialect of limited vocabulary with no pretence to the literary graces, designed as a vehicle of restricted meaning. "Officialese," "legal English" and "business English" merge into one another as the general service dialect of impersonality, for use in every case where people are not private individuals but merely (according to the context) the public, the electorate, the parties concerned, age groups, man power, personnel, consumers. We discuss this dialect at length in Chapter Four.

Some of the chief contentions in this chapter are borne out by Mr. H. G. Andrews, poet and English teacher in a West Country school, who writes:

The presence of the wireless set in eight million English homes makes the job of teaching much harder in these days, especially where the Government system allots only one teacher to forty or fifty children. The child is so used to a background of noise, mainly vocal, that he has acquired the habit of ignoring its import . . .

It is difficult to get boys to grasp the bare essentials of the language, let alone think logically. The standard of good English in these uncertain, disorderly days is imposed by the few on the very many, and the few grow daily more slack and slipshod in their maintenance of the standard. Writers in the Select Press and for the B.B.C. come sprawling arsy versy over the most obvious trip-wires. The increasingly confused state of educated prose has been a chief symptom of the sickness of our wrong-headed civilization during the last twenty years. . . . It is dispiriting to teach the elements of English composition to boys most of whom will not set pen to paper more than a dozen times a year, after they leave school, and then only to sign their names on an indicated dotted line. It would be stupid to teach my boys the analytical syntax that brought a blight on my own boyhood: I teach them such functional grammar as will help them to compose a straightforward, sensible narrative paragraph with the commas and stops

in the right places. I do not bother them with any considerations of euphony — as Lewis Carroll's Duchess said to Alice: "Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves!"

#### QUESTIONS

1. Why should a writer imagine "a crowd of his prospective readers . . . looking over his shoulder" as he composes? What questions should he imagine them asking?
2. What effect does the practice of dictating letters to a stenographer have upon prose style?
3. What special distractions to the reader and writer are produced by modern conditions of living?
4. What is meant by "dividedness of mind" and "modesty" as evidenced in writing?
5. Does the large English vocabulary make the writer's job easier or more difficult?

W. Somerset Maugham

## The Summing Up

*Somerset Maugham, called "the English de Maupassant" because of his genius for storytelling, was trained to be a physician in St. Thomas's Hospital, London. After a year's internship, he abandoned medicine for writing and achieved outstanding success first with his plays, comedies of manners, and then with his autobiographical novel, Of Human Bondage (1915). After World War I he wrote a number of stories based on his travels in the East. "When I began to write," Maugham says, "I took to it as a duck takes to water."*

I have a notion that I was more slow to develop than most writers. Around the years that ended the old century and began the new one I was looked upon as a clever young writer, rather precocious, harsh and somewhat unpleasant, but worth consideration. Though I made little money out of them my books were reviewed at length and conscientiously. But when I compare my early novels with those that are written by young men now I cannot but see that theirs are vastly more accomplished. The ageing writer does well to keep in touch with what the young do and from time to time I read their novels. Girls still in their

From *The Summing Up*, by W. Somerset Maugham. Copyright 1938 by W. Somerset Maugham, reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

teens, youths at the university, produce books that seem to me well-written, well-composed and ripe with experience. I do not know whether the young mature sooner than they did forty years ago or whether it is that the art of fiction has in that time so much advanced that it is now as easy to write a good novel as then it was difficult to write even a mediocre one. If one takes the trouble to look through the volumes of *The Yellow Book*, which at that time seemed the last thing in sophisticated intelligence, it is startling to discover how thoroughly bad the majority of its contributions were. For all their parade these writers were no more than an eddy in a backwater and it is unlikely that the history of English literature will give them more than a passing glance. I shiver a little when I turn those musty pages and ask myself whether in another forty years the bright young things of current letters will appear as jejune as do now their maiden aunts of *The Yellow Book*.

It was fortunate for me that I suddenly achieved popularity as a dramatist and so was relieved of the necessity of writing a novel once a year to earn my living. I found plays easy to write; the notoriety they brought me was not unpleasing; and they earned for me enough money to enable me to live less straitly than I had been obliged to. I have never had the bohemian trait of being unconcerned for the morrow. I have never liked to borrow money. I have hated to be in debt. Nor has the squalid life had any attraction for me. I was not born in squalid circumstances. As soon as I could afford it I bought a house in Mayfair.

There are people who despise possessions. Of course when they say that it ill becomes the artist thus to cumber himself they may be right, but it is not a view that artists themselves have held. They have never lived from choice in the garrets in which their admirers like to see them. They have much more often ruined themselves by the extravagance with which they conducted themselves. After all they are creatures of imagination and state appeals to them, fine houses, servants to do their bidding, rich carpets, lovely pictures, and sumptuous furniture. Titian and Rubens lived like princes. Pope had his Grotto and his Quincunx and Sir Walter his Gothic Abbotsford. El Greco with his suites of rooms, his musicians to play to him while he ate, his library and his grand clothes, died bankrupt. It is unnatural for the artist to live in a semi-detached villa and eat cottage pie cooked by a maid of all work. It shows, not disinterestedness, but an arid, petty soul. For of course to the artist the luxury with which he likes to surround himself is but a diversion. His house, his grounds, his cars, his pictures, are playthings to amuse his fancy; they are visible tokens of his power; they do not penetrate to his essential aloofness. For myself I can say that, having had every good thing that money can buy, an experience like another, I could part without a pang with every possession I have. We live in uncertain times and our all may yet be taken from us. With enough plain food to satisfy my small appetite, a room to myself, books from a public library, pens and paper, I should regret nothing. I was glad to earn a great deal of money as a dramatist. It gave

me liberty. I was careful with it because I did not want ever again to be in a position when for want of it I could not do anything I had really a mind to.

I am a writer as I might have been a doctor or a lawyer. It is so pleasant a profession that it is not surprising if a vast number of persons adopt it who have no qualifications for it. It is exciting and various. The writer is free to work in whatever place and at whatever time he chooses; he is free to idle if he feels ill or dispirited. But it is a profession that has disadvantages. One is that though the whole world, with everyone in it and all its sights and events, is your material, you yourself can only deal with what corresponds to some secret spring in your own nature. The mine is incalculably rich, but each one of us can get from it only a definite amount of ore. Thus in the midst of plenty the writer may starve to death. His material fails him and we say that he has written himself out. I think there are few writers who are not haunted by the fear of this. Another disadvantage is that the professional writer must please. Unless a sufficient number of persons can be found to read him he will starve. Sometimes the stress of circumstances is too great for him and with rage in his heart he yields to the demand of the public. One must not expect too much of human nature and an occasional potboiler may be accepted from him with lenity. The writers who are in independent circumstances should sympathize with, rather than sneer at, those of their brethren whom hard necessity sometimes forces to do hack work. One of the minor sages of Chelsea has remarked that the writer who wrote for money did not write for him. He has said a good many wise things (as indeed a sage should) but this was a very silly one; for the reader has nothing to do with the motive for which the author writes. He is only concerned with the result. Many writers need the spur of necessity to write at all (Samuel Johnson was one of them), but they do not write for money. It would be foolish of them if they did, for there are few avocations in which with equal ability and industry you cannot earn more money than by writing. Most of the great portraits of the world have been painted because their painters were paid to do them. In painting as in writing the excitement of the work is such that when it is once started the artist is absorbed in doing it as well as he can. But just as the painter will not get commissions unless on the whole he satisfies his patrons, so the writer's books will not be read unless on the whole they interest his readers. Yet there is in writers a feeling that the public ought to like what they write and if their books do not sell the fault is not with them but with the public. I have never met an author who admitted that people did not buy his book because it was dull. There are many instances of artists whose work for long has been little appreciated and who yet in the end achieved fame. We do not, however, hear of those whose work has continued to be ignored. Their number is far greater. Where are the votive offerings of those who perished? If it is true that talent consists in a certain facility combined with a peculiar outlook on the world

it is very understandable that originality should not at first be welcomed. In this perpetually changing world people are suspicious of novelty and it takes them some time before they can accustom themselves to it. A writer with an idiosyncrasy has to find little by little the people to whom it appeals. Not only does it take him time to be himself, for the young are themselves only with timidity, but it takes him time to convince that body of persons, whom he will eventually rather pompously call his public, that he has something to give them that they want. The more individual he is the harder will he find it to achieve this and the longer will it take him to earn his living. Nor can he be sure that the result will be lasting, for it may be that with all his individuality he has but one or two things to give and then he will soon sink back into the obscurity from which he with difficulty emerged.

It is easy to say that the writer should have an occupation that provides him with his bread and butter and write in such leisure as this occupation affords him. This course, indeed, was forced upon him very generally in the past, when the author, however distinguished and popular, could not earn enough money by writing to keep body and soul together. It is forced upon him still in countries with a small reading public; he must eke out his livelihood by work in an office, preferably under the government, or by journalism. But the English-speaking writer has the potentiality of such an enormous public that writing can very reasonably be adopted as a profession. It would be more overcrowded than it is if in English-speaking countries the cultivation of the arts were not slightly despised. There is a healthy feeling that to write or to paint is not a man's work, and the social force of this keeps many from entering the ranks. You have to have a very decided urge to enter a profession which exposes you to at least a small degree of moral obloquy. In France and in Germany writing is an honourable occupation, and so is adopted with the consent of parents even though its financial rewards are unsatisfactory. You can often run across a German mother who, when you ask her what her young son is going to be, will answer with complacency, a poet; and in France the family of a girl with a large *dot* will look upon her marriage with a young novelist of talent as a suitable alliance.

But the author does not only write when he is at his desk; he writes all day long, when he is thinking, when he is reading, when he is experiencing; everything he sees and feels is significant to his purpose and, consciously or unconsciously, he is forever storing and making over his impressions. He cannot give an undivided attention to any other calling. He will not follow it to his own satisfaction or that of his employers. The most common one for him to adopt is journalism, because it seems to have a closer connection with his proper work. It is the most dangerous. There is an impersonality in a newspaper that insensibly affects the writer. People who write much for the press seem to lose the faculty of seeing things for themselves; they see them from a generalized standpoint, vividly often, sometimes with hectic brightness, yet never with that idiosyncrasy

which may give only a partial picture of the facts, but is suffused by the personality of the observer. The press, in fact, kills the individuality of those who write for it. Nor is reviewing less harmful; the writer has not the time to read any books but those that directly concern him, and this reading of hundreds of books haphazard, not for the spiritual advantage he may gain from them but to give a reasonably honest account of them, deadens his sensibilities and impedes the free flow of his own imagination. Writing is a whole-time job. To write must be the main object of the author's life; that is to say, he must be a professional writer. He is lucky if he has sufficient fortune to make him independent of his earnings, but that does not prevent him from being a professional writer. Swift with his deanery, Wordsworth with his sinecure, were just as much professional writers as Balzac and Dickens.

It is acknowledged that the technique of painting and of musical composition can only be acquired by assiduous labour, and the productions of dilettantes are rightly regarded with good-humoured or exasperated contempt. We all congratulate ourselves that the radio and the gramophone have driven from our drawing-rooms the amateur pianist and the amateur singer. The technique of writing is no less difficult than that of the other arts and yet, because he can read and write a letter, there is a notion that anyone can write well enough to write a book. Writing seems now the favourite relaxation of the human race. Whole families will take to it as in happier times they entered religious houses. Women will write novels to while away their pregnancies; bored noblemen, axed officers, retired civil servants, fly to the pen as one might fly to the bottle. There is an impression abroad that everyone has it in him to write one book; but if by this is implied a good book the impression is false. It is true that the amateur may sometimes produce a work of merit. By a lucky chance he may have a natural facility for writing well, he may have had experiences that are in themselves interesting, or he may have a charming or quaint personality that his very in-expertness helps him to get down on the printed page. But let him remember that the saying asserts only that everyone has it in him to write one book; it says nothing about a second. The amateur is wise not to try his luck again. His next book is pretty sure to be worthless.

For one of the great differences between the amateur and the professional is that the latter has the capacity to progress. The literature of a country is made not by a few excellent books, I repeat, but by a great body of work, and this can only be produced by professional writers. The literature of those countries that has been produced chiefly by amateurs is thin in comparison with that of the countries in which a number of men, with difficulty trying to make their living, have followed it as a profession. A body of work, an *œuvre*, is the result of long-continued and resolute effort. The author, like other men, learns by the method of trial and error. His early works are tentative; he tries his hand at various sub-

jects and various methods and at the same time develops his character. By a simultaneous process he discovers himself, which is what he has to give, and learns how to display this discovery to the best advantage. Then, in full possession of his faculties, he produces the best of which he is capable. Since writing is a healthy occupation, he will probably go on living long after he has done this, and since by this time writing will have become an ingrained habit he will doubtless continue to produce works of no great consequence. These the public may legitimately neglect. From the standpoint of the reader, very little that the writer produces in the whole course of his life is essential. (By essential, I mean only that small part of him which expresses his individuality, and I attach no implication of absolute value to the word.) But I think he can only give this as the result of a long apprenticeship and at the cost of a good many failures. To do it he must make literature his life's work. He must be a professional author.

I have spoken of the disadvantages of the author's profession: now I should like to speak of its dangers.

It is evident that no professional writer can afford only to write when he feels like it. If he waits till he is in the mood, till he has the inspiration as he says, he waits indefinitely and ends by producing little or nothing. The professional writer creates the mood. He has his inspiration too, but he controls and subdues it to his bidding by setting himself regular hours of work. But in time writing becomes a habit, and like the old actor in retirement, who gets restless when the hour arrives at which he has been accustomed to go down to the theatre and make up for the evening performance, the writer itches to get to his pens and paper at the hours at which he has been used to write. Then he writes automatically. Words come easily to him and words suggest ideas. They are old and empty ideas, but his practised hand can turn out an acceptable piece. He goes down to luncheon or goes to bed with the assurance that he has done a good day's work. Every production of an artist should be the expression of an adventure of his soul. This is a counsel of perfection and in an imperfect world a certain indulgence should be bestowed on the professional writer; but this surely is the aim he should keep before him. He does well only to write to liberate his spirit of a subject that he has so long meditated that it burdens him and if he is wise he will take care to write only for the sake of his own peace. Perhaps the simplest way to break the habit of writing is by changing the environment to one that gives no opportunity for the daily task. You cannot write well or much (and I venture the opinion that you cannot write well unless you write much) unless you form a habit; but habits in writing as in life are only useful if they are broken as soon as they cease to be advantageous.

But the greatest danger that besets the professional author is one that unfortunately only a few have to guard against. Success. It is the most difficult thing the writer has to cope with. When after a long and bitter struggle he has

at last achieved it he finds that it spreads a snare to entangle and destroy him. Few of us have the determination to avoid its perils. It must be dealt with warily. The common idea that success spoils people by making them vain, egotistic and self-complacent is erroneous; on the contrary it makes them, for the most part, humble, tolerant and kind. Failure makes people bitter and cruel. Success improves the character of the man; it does not always improve the character of the author. It may very well deprive him of that force which has brought him success. His individuality has been formed by his experiences; his struggles, his frustrated hopes, his efforts to adapt himself to a hostile world; it must be very stubborn if it is not modified by the softening influences of success.

Success besides often bears within itself the seed of destruction, for it may very well cut the author off from the material that was its occasion. He enters a new world. He is made much of. He must be almost super-human if he is not captivated by the notice taken of him by the great and remains insensible to the attentions of beautiful women. He grows accustomed to another way of life, probably more luxurious than that to which he has been used, and to people who have more of the social graces than those with whom he has consorted before. They are more intellectual and their superficial brilliance is engaging. How difficult it is for him then to move freely still in the circles with which he has been familiar and which have given him his subjects! His success has changed him in the eyes of his old associates and they are no longer at home with him. They may look upon him with envy or with admiration, but no longer as one of themselves. The new world into which his success has brought him excites his imagination and he writes about it; but he sees it from the outside and can never so penetrate it as to become a part of it. No better example of this can be given than Arnold Bennett. He never knew anything intimately but the life of the Five Towns in which he had been born and bred, and it was only when he dealt with them that his work had character. When success brought him into the society of literary people, rich men and smart women, and he sought to deal with them, what he wrote was worthless. Success destroyed him.

The writer is wise then who is wary of success. He must look with dread on the claims that others make on him because of it, the responsibilities it forces on him, and the hindering activities that it brings in its wake. It can only give him two good things: one, the more important by far, is the freedom to follow his own bent, and the other is confidence in himself. Notwithstanding his pretension and his susceptible vanity the author when he compares his work with what he intended it to be is never free from misgiving. There is so great a distance between what he saw in his mind's eye and the best he has been able to do that for him the result is no more than a makeshift. He may be pleased with a page here or there and regard an episode or a character with approval; I think it must be very seldom that he looks upon any work of his as a whole with complete satisfaction. At the back of his mind is the suspicion that it is not good at all



and the praises of the public, even if he is inclined to doubt their value, are a heaven-sent reassurance.

That is why praise is important to him. It is a weakness that he should hanker for it; though perhaps a pardonable one. For the artist should be indifferent to praise and blame, since he is concerned with his work only in its relation to himself, and how it affects the public is a matter in which he is materially perhaps, but not spiritually, concerned. The artist produces for the liberation of his soul. It is his nature to create as it is the nature of water to run down hill. It is not for nothing that artists have called their works the children of their brains and likened the pains of production to the pains of childbirth. It is something like an organic thing that develops, not of course only in their brains, but in their heart, their nerves and their viscera, something that their creative instinct evolves out of the experiences of their soul and their body, and that at last becomes so oppressive that they must rid themselves of it. When this happens they enjoy a sense of liberation and for one delicious moment rest in peace. But unlike human mothers, they lose interest very soon in the child that is born. It is no longer a part of them. It has given them its satisfaction and now their souls are open to a new impregnation.

In the production of his work, the author has fulfilled himself. But that is not to say that it has any value for anyone else. The reader of a book, the observer of a picture, is not concerned with the artist's feelings. The artist has sought release, but the layman seeks for a communication, and he alone can judge whether the communication is valuable to him. To the artist the communication he offers is a by-product. I am not speaking now of those who practise an art to teach; they are propagandists and with them art is a side issue. Artistic creation is a specific activity that is satisfied by its own exercise. The work created may be good art or bad art. That is a matter for the layman to decide. He forms his decision from the æsthetic value of the communication that is offered to him. If it yields escape from the reality of the world he will welcome it, but is very likely at best to describe it only as minor art; if it enriches his soul and enlarges his personality he will rightly describe it as great. But this, I insist, has nothing to do with the artist; it is human that he should be pleased if he has given others pleasure or greater strength; but he should not take it amiss if they find nothing to their purpose in the results of his production. He has already had his reward in the satisfaction of his creative instinct. Now this is no counsel of perfection; it is the only condition on which the artist can work his way towards the unattainable perfection that is his aim. If he is a novelist he uses his experience of people and places, his apprehension of himself, his love and hate, his deepest thoughts, his passing fancies, to draw in one work after another a picture of life. It can never be more than a partial one, but if he is fortunate he will succeed in the end in doing something else; he will draw a complete picture of himself.

At all events to think thus is a consolation when you cast your eye over the publishers' advertisements. When you read those long lists of books and when you discover that reviewers have extolled their wit, profundity, originality and beauty your heart sinks; what chance have you in comparison with so much genius? The publishers will tell you that the average life of a novel is ninety days. It is hard to reconcile yourself to the fact that a book into which you have put, besides your whole self, several months of anxious toil, should be read in three or four hours and after so short a period forgotten. Though it will do him no good, there is no author so small-minded as not to have a secret hope that some part at least of his work will survive him for a generation or two. The belief in posthumous fame is a harmless vanity which often reconciles the artist to the disappointments and failures of his life. How unlikely he is to attain it we see when we look back on the writers who only twenty years ago seemed assured of immortality. Where are their readers now? And with the mass of books that are constantly produced and the ceaseless competition of those that have lived on, how small is the likelihood that work that has been once forgotten will ever be again remembered! There is one very odd, and some may think very unfair, thing about posterity; it seems to choose the works to which it gives attention from those of authors who have been popular in their lifetime. The writers who delight a clique and never reach the great public will never delight posterity, for posterity will never hear about them. It is a consolation to the popular authors who have had it impressed upon them that their popularity was sufficient proof of their worthlessness. It may be that Shakespeare, Scott and Balzac did not write for the minor sage of Chelsea, but it looks as though they did write for after ages. The writer's only safety is to find his satisfaction in his own performance. If he can realize that in the liberation of soul which his work has brought him and in the pleasure of shaping it in such a way as to satisfy to some extent at least his æsthetic sense, he is amply rewarded for his labours, he can afford to be indifferent to the outcome.

For the disadvantages and dangers of the author's calling are offset by an advantage so great as to make all its difficulties, disappointments, and maybe hardships, unimportant. It gives him spiritual freedom. To him life is a tragedy and by his gift of creation he enjoys the catharsis, the purging of pity and terror, which Aristotle tells us is the object of art. For his sins and his follies, the unhappiness that befalls him, his unrequited love, his physical defects, illness, privation, his hopes abandoned, his griefs, humiliations, everything is transformed by his power into material and by writing it he can overcome it. Everything is grist to his mill, from the glimpse of a face in the street to a war that convulses the civilized world, from the scent of a rose to the death of a friend. Nothing befalls him that he cannot transmute into a stanza, a song or a story, and having done this be rid of it. The artist is the only free man. . . .

## QUESTIONS

1. Why is money important to the artist? Should a writer get a newspaper job?
2. What are the financial prospects of a young English or American writer compared to those of a German or Frenchman? How about prestige?
3. Does everyone have it in him to write one book?
4. Why is the artist "the only free man"?

William Faulkner

## Speech of Acceptance, Nobel Prize for Literature

*William Faulkner, Mississippi novelist and short story writer, is the fourth American to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. He made this speech upon being presented with the 1949 Prize ("the money part of it" was about \$30,000) on December 10, 1950.*

I feel that this award was not made to me as a man but to my work — a life's work in the agony and sweat of the human spirit, not for glory and least of all for profit, but to create out of the materials of the human spirit something which did not exist before. So this award is only mine in trust. It will not be difficult to find a dedication for the money part of it commensurate with the purpose and significance of its origin. But I would like to do the same with the acclaim too, by using this moment as a pinnacle from which I might be listened to by the young men and women already dedicated to the same anguish and travail, among whom is already that one who will some day stand here where I am standing.

Our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it. There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only the question: when will I be blown up? Because of this, the young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat.

He must learn them again. He must teach himself that the basest of all things  
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is to be afraid; and, teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart, the old universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed — love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. Until he does so he labors under a curse. He writes not of love but of lust, of defeats in which nobody loses anything of value, of victories without hope and worst of all without pity or compassion. His griefs grieve on no universal bones, leaving no scars. He writes not of the heart but of the glands.

Until he relearns these things he will write as though he stood among and watched the end of man. I decline to accept the end of man. It is easy enough to say that man is immortal simply because he will endure; that when the last ding-dong of doom has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even then there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking. I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: He will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION I

1. What do you consider the most valuable suggestion on improving, or getting more out of, your reading given by Leedy? Adler? Woolf?
2. List ten words in this section which are new to you, and find definitions in the dictionary recommended by Graves and Hodge.
3. What are your favorite types of books? Outline the development of your literary taste since childhood.
4. List several practical suggestions on how to write which you found in this section. Which ideas do you think will be most valuable to you?
5. Compare the theories of Maugham and Faulkner on the function of a writer. Why does or should a writer write? Do you find evidence of cynicism or idealism in their opinions?
6. Are writers born, or can anyone learn to write? Do ideas come in a flash of inspiration, or must you dig for them? Is writing work or fun? Compare Maugham and Leacock on these topics.
7. Mention some advantages and disadvantages of writers today as compared to earlier writers. Find evidence in Maugham and in Graves and Hodge.

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Write a letter to a friend about a book you have just read. Since personal letters are informal, you may choose to (a) disagree with the author on some major point; (b) urge your

friend to read it by stimulating his interest; (c) compare it with some other book; or (d) discuss a character or the background.

2. Write an informal essay on some aspect of your childhood reading: where you liked to read, positions you got into, your favorite books, your local library or a librarian, the "crime" of reading a book you were told not to read, reading habits in your family.

3. Write about your literary career to date: grade school compositions, novels you planned or started, your first poetry, your chief literary failures, ways in which you avoided writing, a high school English teacher, etc

4. Write a theme arguing for or against the freshman composition course in college. Suggestions: Should it be compulsory? What value has it for the average student during college and/or afterwards? What would you like it to include so that you personally would enjoy it and get the most out of it?

## SECTION

# II

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The word *autobiography* starts out like *automobile*, but it arrives at a different place. An automobile takes you somewhere; an autobiography takes you *somewhom*, we might say. It drives straight into a human heart. We are all curious about what great men, or even ordinary men, really think and, in their private lives, really do. In their autobiographies, many have told us.

For this reason, you will enjoy reading the selections in this section as much as those in any other section of the book. And for the same reason you might even write an autobiography that other people would enjoy. “But nothing has ever happened to me!” is the usual reaction to such a suggestion. Take a look at these professional autobiographers, though. What happened to them? Thoreau camped in the woods and wrote a book about it. Mark Twain joined a company of soldiers who spent several months *avoiding* a war, and this gave him material for nine thousand words. As for Thurber, he just went to college!

But you have to write only a few hundred words, and once you have figured out how these other writers do it, your chief problem will be, not “What am I going to write about?” but rather the problems of selection and interest. A personal experience theme is not a list of accomplishments; don’t try to set down your whole life, but select some interesting episode or angle. *Use* the autobiographical pieces in this anthology, after you have enjoyed reading them; they will give you ideas, and also suggest ways of arranging your material.

Take, to begin with, Cornelia Otis Skinner’s short, theme-length anecdote, from her *Family Circle*. Notice how she starts (*not* with the date of her birth): “One day, which still remains in my memory as ‘the calico-dress and express-wagon day,’ was the most miserable of that none too carefree year.” This is an excellent first sentence, and illustrates several of the principles (there aren’t many) of this kind of writing. Since — let’s face it — your theme *may* get read in class, we may as well see how to make it interesting.

In the first place, a personal experience theme, an autobiographical frag-

ment, is a narrative. Without anticipating the subtler aspects of narrative writing, we can say that you want to work some *suspense* in. Cornelia Otis Skinner does that with the catchy “calico-dress and express-wagon” phrase, not completely clear yet, and with the statement that this experience made her more miserable than any other. What could it have been? A few sentences further along, after indicating her comparative poverty in the school she was attending, she brings in a rather nasty-sounding little rich girl, which suggests to the reader a possible *conflict*, and a clash does, in fact, develop.

In addition to having a dash of narrative *suspense* and *conflict*, be sure to tell everything that happened consistently from your own *point of view*; let the reader know what *you* were thinking, what *you* were feeling all the time. Cornelia Otis Skinner starts right out with this; she is writing about the day on which she felt most miserable.

You should also use *specific, vivid detail* at crucial points in the story, as Miss Skinner does in describing the material of the ill-fated dress (“a pretty calico, darkish blue, with an enchanting pattern of tiny stars and crescent moons”). And you should have a single clear *point* or idea that is brought out by the complete anecdote. The point of the *Family Circle* episode is that on that day, when the nasty little rich girl jeered at her homemade dress, Cornelia Otis Skinner first became aware of class feeling and snobbishness, and the misery it causes. Your point might be that, through your experience, you first realized that your parents aren’t perfect — and loved them more than ever for it. Or, that you discovered — with relief — that you are no football player. Whatever it is, try to make it an interesting one, if possible a surprising one.

Write up the experience in a simple, straightforward style, just as you’d talk to a friend. Use dialogue if it comes in naturally and if you can make it sound natural, otherwise not. Make the tone either serious or humorous, but better not try to mix them. Remember to have *suspense, conflict, consistent point of view, vivid detail*, and a *point*. This is the safest prescription for a beginner at this kind of writing.

Now, keeping these principles in mind, you can learn more about the autobiographical piece by seeing how other authors in this section turn the trick. Thurber’s “University Days” consists of four fully developed little scenes (complete with dialogue and characterization), and one paragraph of narrated action (Thurber’s troubles in the gymnasium). It gives a good cross section of the people in this particular locale (a state university): a football player, instructors (peppery botany man and meek economics prof), an “aggie,” R.O.T.C. commandant, student in danger of flunking a course (Thurber himself). The subject of the piece, Thurber’s college problems, is introduced in the opening sentence (“I passed all the other courses that I took at my university, but I could never pass botany.”). The way to write this kind of piece is to dramatize a few significant incidents that make some point about one of your experiences, trying to

bring the other people involved to life (it was difficult for the football player to keep up in his studies, "for while he was not dumber than an ox he was not any smarter") and emphasizing elements of conflict or struggle (Thurber versus the microscope, the economics prof versus the football player, etc.).

Thoreau's method in "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," on the other hand, is very different from Thurber's. If you want to learn another person's innermost thoughts, turn to Thoreau. Why do we live? Is life essentially mean or essentially glorious? What does the morning newspaper do for — or to — you? The railroad (and the automobile)? How "free" are you in this democratic but materialistic half of the world? "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation," Thoreau thinks — but he will not. He will go out into the woods to be with himself, to dive *into* himself, so intensely, so profoundly, that, although he sought solitude, he has since, through his book, found a multitude of followers to share his inner life.

In form, Thoreau's autobiographical sketch consists of an introductory account of an unusual but not especially exciting experience (his near-purchase of Hollowell Farm, followed by his going to live beside Walden Pond), and then a long explanation of the meaning of that experience. (Note that Thoreau deliberately refuses to develop or dramatize the near-purchase of the farm, which a Thurber might have made very amusing.) Thoreau's piece is a good model for a theme emphasizing your thoughts about life; but notice that Thoreau brings out the "think" nature of his chapter right at the beginning, with a suggestion that true "ownership" of a farm means not the legal possession but the enjoyment of it. The action in "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For" is not exciting, but Thoreau's thinking is; and the reader goes on in anticipation of more striking and original thoughts.

Twain's "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed" is autobiography in the form of an adventure story. It has more complete narrative technique than either Thurber or Thoreau, since it begins with set descriptions of characters, tells of several exciting marches and retreats of the "Marion Rangers," and has a climax in the "battle" with one man. The humor and also the serious ideas are brought out by Twain's presenting the action from his point of view years after the event, a mature, compassionate point of view. For example, at the reported approach of the enemy, the question of what to do arises, but not in the sense a reader might expect: "The rumor was but a rumor — nothing definite about it; so in the confusion we did not know which way to retreat. Lyman [their commanding officer] was for not retreating at all in these uncertain circumstances, but he found that if he tried to maintain that attitude he would fare badly, for the command were in no humor to put up with insubordination."

Probably to keep this point of view foremost, Twain uses no dialogue (in the main story); speeches are all in indirect discourse, as in the passage quoted. He has an excellent — a logical and moving — climax when the company of



bunglers, forced to “fight” by accident, shoot and kill a lone horseman, then discover it was all a mistake. This was an innocent traveler, a civilian tormented by the thought of his destitute wife and child as he dies. The piece ends quickly after that; Twain and several others resign from the war — though the last few sentences are in the same humorous tone as the beginning, Twain reflecting that at least he had mastered the art of retreating. This is a very powerful piece; not so easy a model as some of the others.

Strout White’s “Farewell, My Lovely!” is reminiscence, a personal essay rather than the usual chronological narrative. The method here is to select a few outstanding features of a subject, and illustrate them by anecdotes. The essay consists of a lyrical statement of the subject (lament for the passing of the Model T) in paragraphs one and two; three sections of description and anecdote (transmission and general make-up of the car, accessories, and legends); and a conclusion (“Farewell, my lovely!”). There are no fully developed scenes, except possibly the one at the end with the ferry captain; but there are many candid shots of the author or others in typical poses with the Model T (e.g., the Model T “nuzzling” the author as it explodes into action after being cranked, other drivers clenching their teeth and giving an ailing timer a “smart crack with a wrench,” etc.). Interest is held chiefly through humorous description and comment: “Persons of a suspicious or pugnacious turn of mind bought a rear-view mirror; but most Model T owners weren’t worried by what was coming from behind because they would soon enough see it out in front.” This is a simple type of personal experience sketch to write, so far as structure is concerned, but a good style is needed to put it across — clever thoughts, cleverly expressed.

Finally, Papashvily’s “Anything Can Happen” gives us the most elementary kind of narrative, a narrative with a childlike quality to it suggested by the short sentences and occasional mistakes in idiom. Note the simple beginning: “At five in the morning the engines stopped, and after thirty-seven days the boat was quiet. We were in America.” And the statement of our hero’s problem: “Now began my troubles. What to do? . . . I had spent all my landing money for extra food.”

This is just like a short story. Indeed, it *is* a sketchy short story, ending with the hero’s solution of his problem (after being cheated on the boat and losing one job through incompetence) by landing a job that the reader knows he has the ability to hold. The action is described simply, and there is very little characterization; what there is is mostly through dialogue, with the revelation of a single trait per character (envious Hassan, friendly Zurabeg, the harassed restaurant lady, etc.). There is much conversation, just as when a child tells a story. (“Now we are in America and you have no money to land,” Hassan tells Papashvily. “In your position, frankly, I would kill myself.”) The way to write such a piece is to give yourself a tough problem to solve, describe several clear-cut attempts to solve it ending in failure, and then tell of a last attempt which succeeds.

There are as many other ways of writing autobiographies as there are people to write them. If you've enjoyed reading these, you'll want to look up such masterpieces as Rousseau's egotistical *Confessions* ("I am not made like any of those I have seen; I venture to believe that I am not made like any of those who are in existence"); or St. Augustine's religious *Confessions*, popular for fifteen hundred years; or Hans Christian Andersen's *The True Story of My Life*, beginning like one of his own fairy tales, "My life is a lovely story"; or Benjamin Franklin's shrewd account of early days in America; or *The Education of Henry Adams*, showing Henry Adams puzzling over the meaning of the coming of the machine age and its conflicts. Autobiography assures us that our fears and problems have perplexed others, that we are all linked together by a common bond of humanity; it teaches us to understand our own emotions, successes and failures, thoughts and dreams.

*A leading American humorist for many years associated with The New Yorker magazine and noted also for his line drawings of dogs and people, James Thurber published My Life and Hard Times, from which this selection is taken, in 1933. He observes that humorists lead "an existence of jumpiness and apprehension. They sit on the edge of the chair of Literature. In the house of Life they have the feeling that they have never taken off their overcoats."*

I passed all the other courses that I took at my university, but I could never pass botany. This was because all botany students had to spend several hours a week in a laboratory looking through a microscope at plant cells, and I could never see through a microscope. I never once saw a cell through a microscope. This used to enrage my instructor. He would wander around the laboratory pleased with the progress all the students were making in drawing the involved and, so I am told, interesting structure of flower cells, until he came to me. I would just be standing there. "I can't see anything," I would say. He would begin patiently enough, explaining how anybody can see through a microscope, but he would always end up in a fury, claiming that I could *too* see through a microscope but just pretended that I couldn't. "It takes away from the beauty of flowers anyway," I used to tell him. "We are not concerned with beauty in this course," he would say. "We are concerned solely with what I may call the *mechanics* of flars." "Well," I'd say, "I can't see anything." "Try it just once again," he'd say, and I would put my eye to the microscope and see nothing at all, except now and again, a nebulous milky substance — a phenomenon of maladjustment. You were supposed to see a vivid, restless clockwork of sharply defined plant cells. "I see what looks like a lot of milk," I would tell him. This, he claimed, was the result of my not having adjusted the microscope properly; so he would readjust it for me, or rather, for himself. And I would look again and see milk.

I finally took a deferred pass, as they called it, and waited a year and tried again. (You had to pass one of the biological sciences or you couldn't graduate.) The professor had come back from vacation brown as a berry, bright-eyed, and eager to explain cell-structure again to his classes. "Well," he said to me, cheerily, when we met in the first laboratory hour of the semester, "we're going to see cells this time, aren't we?" "Yes, sir," I said. Students to right of me and to left of me and in front of me were seeing cells; what's more, they were quietly drawing pictures of them in their notebooks. Of course, I didn't see anything.

"We'll try it," the professor said to me, grimly, "with every adjustment of

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the microscope known to man. As God is my witness, I'll arrange this glass so that you see cells through it or I'll give up teaching. In twenty-two years of botany, I —" He cut off abruptly for he was beginning to quiver all over, like Lionel Barrymore, and he genuinely wished to hold onto his temper; his scenes with me had taken a great deal out of him.

So we tried it with every adjustment of the microscope known to man. With only one of them did I see anything but blackness or the familiar lacteal opacity, and that time I saw, to my pleasure and amazement, a variegated constellation of flecks, specks, and dots. These I hastily drew. The instructor, noting my activity, came back from an adjoining desk, a smile on his lips and his eyebrows high in hope. He looked at my cell drawing. "What's that?" he demanded, with a hint of a squeal in his voice. "That's what I saw," I said. "You didn't, you didn't, you *didn't*!" he screamed, losing control of his temper instantly, and he bent over and squinted into the microscope. His head snapped up. "That's your eye!" he shouted. "You've fixed the lens so that it reflects! You've drawn your eye!"

Another course that I didn't like, but somehow managed to pass, was economics. I went to that class straight from the botany class, which didn't help me any in understanding either subject. I used to get them mixed up. But not as mixed up as another student in my economics class who came there direct from a physics laboratory. He was a tackle on the football team, named Bolenciewicz. At that time Ohio State University had one of the best football teams in the country, and Bolenciewicz was one of its outstanding stars. In order to be eligible to play it was necessary for him to keep up in his studies, a very difficult matter, for while he was not dumber than an ox he was not any smarter. Most of his professors were lenient and helped him along. None gave him more hints, in answering questions, or asked him simpler ones than the economics professor, a thin, timid man named Bassum. One day when we were on the subject of transportation and distribution, it came Bolenciewicz's turn to answer a question. "Name one means of transportation," the professor said to him. No light came into the big tackle's eyes. "Just any means of transportation," said the professor. Bolenciewicz sat staring at him. "That is," pursued the professor, "any medium, agency, or method of going from one place to another." Bolenciewicz had the look of a man who is being led into a trap. "You may choose among steam, horse-drawn, or electrically propelled vehicles," said the instructor. "I might suggest the one which we commonly take in making long journeys across land." There was a profound silence in which everybody stirred uneasily, including Bolenciewicz and Mr. Bassum. Mr. Bassum abruptly broke this silence in an amazing manner. "Choo-choo-choo," he said, in a low voice, and turned instantly scarlet. He glanced appealingly around the room. All of us, of course, shared Mr. Bassum's desire that Bolenciewicz should stay abreast of the class in economics, for the Illinois game, one of the hardest and most important of

the season, was only a week off. "Toot, toot, too-tooooooot!" some student with a deep voice moaned, and we all looked encouragingly at Bolenciewicz. Somebody else gave a fine imitation of a locomotive letting off steam. Mr. Bassum himself rounded off the little show. "Ding, dong, ding, dong," he said, hopefully. Bolenciewicz was staring at the floor now, trying to think, his great brow furrowed, his huge hands rubbing together, his face red.

"How did you come to college this year, Mr. Bolenciewicz?" asked the professor. "*Chuffa chuffa, chuffa chuffa.*"

"M'father sent me," said the football player.

"What on?" asked Bassum.

"I git an 'lowance," said the tackle, in a low, husky voice, obviously embarrassed.

"No, no," said Bassum. "Name a means of transportation. What did you *ride* here on?"

"Train," said Bolenciewicz.

"Quite right," said the professor. "Now, Mr. Nugent, will you tell us —"

If I went through anguish in botany and economics — for different reasons — gymnasium work was even worse. I don't even like to think about it. They wouldn't let you play games or join in the exercises with your glasses on and I couldn't see with mine off. I bumped into professors, horizontal bars, agricultural students, and swinging iron rings. Not being able to see, I could take it but I couldn't dish it out. Also, in order to pass gymnasium (and you had to pass it to graduate) you had to learn to swim if you didn't know how. I didn't like the swimming pool, I didn't like swimming, and I didn't like the swimming instructor, and after all these years I still don't. I never swam but I passed my gym work anyway, by having another student give my gymnasium number (978) and swim across the pool in my place. He was a quiet, amiable blonde youth, number 473, and he would have seen through a microscope for me if we could have got away with it, but we couldn't get away with it. Another thing I didn't like about gymnasium work was that they made you strip the day you registered. It is impossible for me to be happy when I am stripped and being asked a lot of questions. Still, I did better than a lanky agricultural student who was cross-examined just before I was. They asked each student what college he was in — that is, whether Arts, Engineering, Commerce, or Agriculture. "What college are you in?" the instructor snapped at the youth in front of me. "Ohio State University," he said promptly.

It wasn't that agricultural student but it was another a whole lot like him who decided to take up journalism, possibly on the ground that when farming went to hell he could fall back on newspaper work. He didn't realize, of course, that that would be very much like falling back full-length on a kit of carpenter's tools. Haskins didn't seem cut out for journalism, being too embarrassed to talk to anybody and unable to use a typewriter, but the editor of the college paper

assigned him to the cow barns, the sheep house, the horse pavilion, and the animal husbandry department generally. This was a genuinely big "beat," for it took up five times as much ground and got ten times as great a legislative appropriation as the College of Liberal Arts. The agricultural student knew animals, but nevertheless his stories were dull and colorlessly written. He took all afternoon on each of them, because he had to hunt for each letter on the typewriter. Once in a while he had to ask somebody to help him hunt. "C" and "L," in particular, were hard letters for him to find. His editor finally got pretty much annoyed at the farmer-journalist because his pieces were so uninteresting. "See here, Haskins," he snapped at him one day, "why is it we never have anything hot from you on the horse pavilion? Here we have two hundred head of horses on this campus — more than any other university in the Western Conference except Purdue — and yet you never get any real low-down on them. Now shoot over to the horse barns and dig up something lively." Haskins shambled out and came back in about an hour; he said he had something. "Well, start it off snappily," said the editor. "Something people will read." Haskins set to work and in a couple of hours brought a sheet of typewritten paper to the desk; it was a two-hundred word story about some disease that had broken out among the horses. Its opening sentence was simple but arresting. It read: "Who has noticed the sores on the tops of the horses in the animal husbandry building?"

Ohio State was a land grant university and therefore two years of military drill was compulsory. We drilled with old Springfield rifles and studied the tactics of the Civil War even though the World War was going on at the time. At 11 o'clock each morning thousands of freshmen and sophomores used to deploy over the campus, moodily creeping up on the old chemistry building. It was good training for the kind of warfare that was waged at Shiloh but it had no connection with what was going on in Europe. Some people used to think there was German money behind it, but they didn't dare say so or they would have been thrown in jail as German spies. It was a period of muddy thought and marked, I believe, the decline of higher education in the Middle West.

As a soldier I was never any good at all. Most of the cadets were glumly indifferent soldiers, but I was no good at all. Once General Littlefield, who was commandant of the cadet corps, popped up in front of me during regimental drill and snapped, "You are the main trouble with this university!" I think he meant that my type was the main trouble with the university but he may have meant me individually. I was mediocre at drill, certainly — that is, until my senior year. By that time I had drilled longer than anybody else in the Western Conference, having failed at military at the end of each preceding year so that I had to do it all over again. I was the only senior still in uniform. The uniform which, when new, had made me look like an interurban railway conductor, now that it had become faded and too tight, made me look like Bert Williams in his

bell-boy act. This had a definitely bad effect on my morale. Even so, I had become by sheer practise little short of wonderful at squad manoeuvres.

One day General Littlefield picked our company out of the whole regiment and tried to get it mixed up by putting it through one movement after another as fast as we could execute them: squads right, squads left, squads on right into line, squads right about, squads left front into line, etc. In about three minutes one hundred and nine men were marching in one direction and I was marching away from them at an angle of forty-five degrees, all alone. "Company, halt!" shouted General Littlefield, "That man is the only man who has it right!" I was made a corporal for my achievement.

The next day General Littlefield summoned me to his office. He was swatting flies when I went in. I was silent and he was silent too, for a long time. I don't think he remembered me or why he had sent for me, but he didn't want to admit it. He swatted some more flies, keeping his eyes on them narrowly before he let go with the swatter. "Button up your coat!" he snapped. Looking back on it now I can see that he meant me although he was looking at a fly, but I just stood there. Another fly came to rest on a paper in front of the general and began rubbing its hind legs together. The general lifted the swatter cautiously. I moved restlessly and the fly flew away. "You startled him!" barked General Littlefield, looking at me severely. I said I was sorry. "That won't help the situation!" snapped the General, with cold military logic. I didn't see what I could do except offer to chase some more flies toward his desk, but I didn't say anything. He stared out the window at the faraway figures of co-eds crossing the campus toward the library. Finally, he told me I could go. So I went. He either didn't know which cadet I was or else he forgot what he wanted to see me about. It may have been that he wished to apologize for having called me the main trouble with the university; or maybe he had decided to compliment me on my brilliant drilling of the day before and then at the last minute decided not to. I don't know. I don't think about it much any more.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What were some of Thurber's problems in college?
2. Is the humor in the microscope incident based more on clever choice of words, or on situation, or on character?
3. Which incident contains the most dialogue, and why did Thurber use dialogue here?
4. Is General Littlefield's absent-mindedness plausible?
5. What over-all impression of the state university of Thurber's day does this selection give?

*Most noted for her acting, particularly for her specialty, the monologue, in which she plays the parts of an entire cast (such as all the wives of Henry VIII), Cornelia Otis Skinner brings the same gay spirit to her writing. Family Circle, featuring her famous father, Otis Skinner, the actor, is one of a long line of hilarious autobiographical works. This more than usually serious bit from her childhood shows a "naturally quiet and . . . painfully shy" little girl at the Baldwin School, near Philadelphia.*

One day, which still remains in my memory as "the calico-dress and express-wagon day," was the most miserable of that none too carefree year. Mother had made me a dress which, as I recall it, must have been one of unusual charm and imagination. She had come across the material in the country store near Conshohocken, an ancient, dingy emporium whose shelves were laden with bolts of fascinating dress goods, of almost ante-bellum vintage. For this particular garment, she chose a pretty calico, darkish blue, with an enchanting pattern of tiny stars and crescent moons. For model, she copied a frock from a Kate Greenaway illustration, with puffed sleeves and an Empire-like high waist. It was trimmed at the bottom with two rows of white rickrack. In taste and originality it probably put to shame Elise's modish sailor suits made, as she told everybody, by her mother's Chestnut Street tailor. Mother took great pains with it, I thought it was just lovely, and the first time I put it on, the admiring Crawfords said I was a "picture." Pleased and happy, I went off to school. The picture the Crawfords had in mind may have been one of pristine charm and quaintness, but the one I presented to my Comanche schoolmates was something, apparently, to be equaled in humor only by something out of the funny papers. They nudged one another, they pointed at me, they tittered and Elise passed an ultimate verdict on my frock by calling it "poor-folksy!" The morning passed for me in complete misery and I counted the minutes until Johnnie the coachman would call for me in the runabout and take me away from the hateful place. Eventually the final bell sounded, and I was called for, not by Johnnie in the runabout, but by Alan in the express wagon. The express wagon was a battered vehicle used for transporting pigeon crates to and from the station, and Alan was a farmhand equally battered. Today he looked worse than usual, his ragged blue jeans were spotted with birdlime, and his chin was furry with a three days' growth of beard. Ordinarily I welcomed a chance to ride in the express wagon.



One could sit beside Alan on the driver's seat and feel vastly important or one could sit back amid the pigeon crates, on one's own seat, and feel vastly uncomfortable but adventuresome. Alan was a taciturn son of the soil, a generous coating of which he bore on his person, and he smelled to high heaven, but I thought him rather wonderful. I had not heard of class consciousness and Alan and the express wagon seemed to me as felicitous a means of transportation as any. But today, as I looked out of the window, drawn up beside my rustic equipage was Elise's glistening dogcart with its smart little cob and the groom impressive in the Murphy livery, and my heart, which was already pretty low, sank to new depths of wretchedness. I hoped with my soul that I might be able to slink away without being seen, but, quick as a ferret, Elise spotted the wagon and guessed — from my expression — that it was there for me.

"Look!" she squealed with delight, "Cinderella's coach has called for her! See what Chameleon's family send her to school in!" Then her black, malicious eye fell upon Alan and with mock politeness she said: "Is that your father driving it?"

If I hadn't been the small fool of the world, I would have fought back and even now the memory fills me with a desire to take a train to the town where Elise now leads a reformed and exemplary life and amaze her with a long-delayed uppercut to the jaw. However, all I did at the time was to grab my corduroy school bag (Elise's was of the finest leather) and run out of the building, blinded with tears of fury and hurt.

With a child's instinctive shyness at sharing private grievances with parents, I told Mother nothing of what had happened. But she knew something was tearing at my confused emotions when, at supper, I burst into uncontrollable tears. Wisely she let me cry it all out — then gently asked me what the trouble was. All I told her was that I never again wanted to wear that "poor child's dress." From observations I had made she figured out the situation and, after reassuring me, quietly put away the little frock over which she had taken such tender pains. . . .

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is Cornelia's chief emotion?
2. What incident marks the climax of her discomfiture?
3. Which character's appearance is described in the greatest detail, and why?
4. Was Cornelia class-conscious? Was Elise? Give evidence for your opinion.

*On his third day at Walden Pond, Henry Thoreau, individualist and nature lover, wrote, "I wish to meet the facts of life . . . face to face, and so I came down here." He lived two years in his hut on the Massachusetts lake property owned by his friend Emerson, a hut once described as no more than "a larger coat and hat — a sentry box on the shore." This selection consists of the introductory paragraphs of the first chapter and all of the second. The complete account of his experience, published in 1854, is a classic of American literature.*

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like. Others have been curious to learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the *I*, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives; some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are more particularly addressed to poor students. As for the rest of my readers, they will accept such portions as apply to them. I trust that none will stretch the seams in putting on the coat, for it may do good service to him whom it fits. . . .

At a certain season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it, — took everything but a deed of it, — took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk, — cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes*, a seat? — better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard, woodlot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms, — the refusal was all I wanted, — but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife — every man has such a wife — changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes, —

I am monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute.

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were: its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put such an interval between me and the last occupant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements. To enjoy these advantages I was ready to carry it on; like Atlas, to take the world on my shoulders, — I never heard what compensation he received for that, — and do all those things which had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it; for I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted, if I could only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as I have said.

All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale — I have always cultivated a garden — was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all: As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

Old Cato, whose "*De Re Rusticâ*" is my "*Cultivator*," says, — and the only translation I have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage, — "When you think of getting a farm turn it thus in your mind, not to buy greedily; nor spare your pains to look at it, and do not think it enough to go round it once. The oftener you go there the more it will please you, if it is good." I think I shall not buy greedily, but go round and round it as long as I live, and be buried in it first, that it may please me the more at last.

The present was my next experiment of this kind, which I purpose to describe more at length, for convenience putting the experience of two years into one. As I have said, I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as

lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this aüroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager, — the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far

above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill-top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land*.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon," — said Damodara, when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of

the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted; —

There was a shepherd that did live,  
And held his thoughts as high  
As were the mounts whereon his flocks  
Did hourly feed him by.

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air — to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, "All intelligences

awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add



his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them*, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work*, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a

man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire, — or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe," — and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life — I wrote this some years ago — that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter, — we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure, — news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions, — they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers, — and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never

need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!" The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week, — for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one, — with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice, "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam" go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or

a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry, — determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui*, below freshet and frost and fire, a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have

always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore paws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining-rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What part of the day does Thoreau consider best, and why?
2. Why did Thoreau go to live in the woods alone by Walden Pond?
3. What charges does Thoreau bring against railroads and post offices?
4. When Thoreau advocates, "Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature," is he urging everyone to join him in the woods? If not, what does he mean?
5. Explain "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."

## Mark Twain

# The Private History of a Campaign That Failed

*Mark Twain's account of his experiences with the Marion Rangers in Missouri has been called "a lonely realism" among the writings about the Civil War. Twain (Second Lieutenant Samuel Langhorne Clemens) was a training casualty; he had boils and sprained an ankle. The Rangers were disbanded, their men mobilized in other units of the Confederate Army, but Mark Twain, having been converted meanwhile to the Union cause, went West. In 1885 he published this "not unfair picture of what went on in many and many a militia camp" in Century magazine.*

You have heard from a great many people who did something in the war, is it not fair and right that you listen a little moment to one who started out to do something in it, but didn't? Thousands entered the war, got just a taste of it, and then stepped out again permanently. These, by their very numbers, are respect-

From *The American Claimant* by Mark Twain. Harper and Brothers.

able and are therefore entitled to a sort of a voice — not a loud one but a modest one, not a boastful one but an apologetic one. They ought not to be allowed much space among better people — people who did something. I grant that, but they ought at least to be allowed to state why they didn't do anything and also to explain the process by which they didn't do anything. Surely this kind of light must have a sort of value.

Out West there was a good deal of confusion in men's minds during the first months of the great trouble — a good deal of unsettledness, of leaning first this way, then that, then the other way. It was hard for us to get our bearings. I call to mind an instance of this. I was piloting on the Mississippi when the news came that South Carolina had gone out of the Union on the 20th of December, 1860. My pilot mate was a New Yorker. He was strong for the Union; so was I. But he would not listen to me with any patience; my loyalty was smirched, to his eye, because my father had owned slaves. I said in palliation of this dark fact that I had heard my father say, some years before he died, that slavery was a great wrong and that he would free the solitary Negro he then owned if he could think it right to give away the property of the family when he was so straitened in means. My mate retorted that a mere impulse was nothing — anybody could pretend to a good impulse, and went on decrying my Unionism and libeling my ancestry. A month later the secession atmosphere had considerably thickened on the Lower Mississippi and I became a rebel; so did he. We were together in New Orleans the 26th of January, when Louisiana went out of the Union. He did his full share of the rebel shouting but was bitterly opposed to letting me do mine. He said that I came of bad stock — of a father who had been willing to set slaves free. In the following summer he was piloting a Federal gunboat and shouting for the Union again and I was in the Confederate army. I held his note for some borrowed money. He was one of the most upright men I ever knew but he repudiated that note without hesitation because I was a rebel and the son of a man who owned slaves.

In that summer of 1861 the first wash of the wave of war broke upon the shores of Missouri. Our state was invaded by the Union forces. They took possession of St. Louis, Jefferson Barracks, and some other points. The Governor, Claib Jackson, issued his proclamation calling out fifty thousand militia to repel the invader.

I was visiting in the small town where my boyhood had been spent, Hannibal, Marion County. Several of us got together in a secret place by night and formed ourselves into a military company. One Tom Lyman, a young fellow of a good deal of spirit but of no military experience, was made captain; I was made second lieutenant. We had no first lieutenant; I do not know why; it was long ago. There were fifteen of us. By the advice of an innocent connected with the organization we called ourselves the Marion Rangers. I do not remember that any one found fault with the name. I did not; I thought it sounded quite well. The young

fellow who proposed this title was perhaps a fair sample of the kind of stuff we were made of. He was young, ignorant, good-natured, well-meaning, trivial, full of romance, and given to reading chivalric novels and singing forlorn love-ditties. He had some pathetic little nickel-plated aristocratic instincts and detested his name, which was Dunlap; detested it partly because it was nearly as common in that region as Smith but mainly because it had a plebeian sound to his ear. So he tried to ennoble it by writing it in this way: *d'Unlap*. That contented his eye but left his ear unsatisfied, for people gave the new name the same old pronunciation — emphasis on the front end of it. He then did the bravest thing that can be imagined, a thing to make one shiver when one remembers how the world is given to resenting shams and affectations, he began to write his name so: *d'Un Lap*. And he waited patiently through the long storm of mud that was flung at this work of art and he had his reward at last, for he lived to see that name accepted and the emphasis put where he wanted it by people who had known him all his life, and to whom the tribe of Dunlaps had been as familiar as the rain and the sunshine for forty years. So sure of victory at last is the courage that can wait. He said he had found by consulting some ancient French chronicles that the name was rightly and originally written *d'Un Lap*, and said that if it were translated into English it would mean Peterson: *Lap*, Latin or Greek, he said, for stone or rock, same as the French *pierre*, that is to say, Peter: *d'*, of or from; *un*, a or one; hence, *d'Un Lap*, of or from a stone or a Peter; that is to say, one who is the son of a stone, the son of a Peter -- Peterson. Our militia company were not learned and the explanation confused them; so they called him Peterson Dunlap. He proved useful to us in his way; he named our camps for us and he generally struck a name that was "no slouch," as the boys said.

That is one sample of us. Another was Ed Stevens, son of the town jeweler, trim-built, handsome, graceful, neat as a cat; bright, educated, but given over entirely to fun. There was nothing serious in life to him. As far as he was concerned, this military expedition of ours was simply a holiday. I should say that about half of us looked upon it in the same way; not consciously, perhaps, but unconsciously. We did not think; we were not capable of it. As for myself, I was full of unreasoning joy to be done with turning out of bed at midnight and four in the morning for a while, grateful to have a change, new scenes, new occupations, a new interest. In my thoughts that was as far as I went; I did not go into the details; as a rule one doesn't at twenty-four.

Another sample was Smith, the blacksmith's apprentice. This vast donkey had some pluck, of a slow and sluggish nature, but a soft heart; at one time he would knock a horse down for some impropriety and at another he would get homesick and cry. However, he had one ultimate credit to his account which some of us hadn't; he stuck to the war and was killed in battle at last.

Jo Bowers, another sample, was a huge, good-natured, flax-headed lubber,

lazy, sentimental, full of harmless brag, a grumbler by nature; an experienced, industrious, ambitious, and often quite picturesque liar and yet not a successful one, for he had had no intelligent training but was allowed to come up just any way. This life was serious enough to him, and seldom satisfactory. But he was a good fellow, anyway, and the boys all liked him. He was made orderly sergeant; Stevens was made corporal.

These samples will answer — and they are quite fair ones. Well, this herd of cattle started for the war. What could you expect of them? They did as well as they knew how but, really, what was justly to be expected of them? Nothing, I should say. That is what they did.

We waited for a dark night, for caution and secrecy were necessary; then toward midnight we stole in couples and from various directions to the Griffith place, beyond the town; from that point we set out together on foot. Hannibal lies at the extreme southeastern corner of Marion County, on the Mississippi River; our objective point was the hamlet of New London, ten miles away, in Ralls County.

The first hour was all fun, all idle nonsense and laughter. But that could not be kept up. The steady trudging came to be like work, the play had somehow oozed out of it, the stillness of the woods and the somberness of the night began to throw a depressing influence over the spirits of the boys, and presently the talking died out and each person shut himself up in his own thoughts. During the last half of the second hour nobody said a word.

Now we approached a log farm-house where, according to report, there was a guard of five Union soldiers. Lyman called a halt and there, in the deep gloom of the overhanging branches, he began to whisper a plan of assault upon that house, which made the gloom more depressing than it was before. It was a crucial moment; we realized with a cold suddenness that here was no jest — we were standing face to face with actual war. We were equal to the occasion. In our response there was no hesitation, no indecision: we said that if Lyman wanted to meddle with those soldiers, he could go ahead and do it, but if he waited for us to follow him, he would wait a long time.

Lyman urged, pleaded, tried to shame us, but it had no effect. Our course was plain, our minds were made up: we would flank the farm-house — go out around. And that was what we did.

We struck into the woods and entered upon a rough time, stumbling over roots, getting tangled in vines and torn by briars. At last we reached an open place in a safe region and sat down, blown and hot, to cool off and nurse our scratches and bruises. Lyman was annoyed but the rest of us were cheerful; we had flanked the farm-house, we had made our first military movement and it was a success; we had nothing to fret about, we were feeling just the other way. Horse-play and laughing began again; the expedition was become a holiday frolic once more.



Then we had two more hours of dull trudging and ultimate silence and depression; then about dawn we straggled into New London, soiled, heel-blistered, fagged with our little march, and all of us except Stevens in a sour and raspy humor and privately down on the war. We stacked our shabby old shotguns in Colonel Ralls's barn and then went in a body and breakfasted with that veteran of the Mexican War. Afterward he took us to a distant meadow, and there in the shade of a tree we listened to an old-fashioned speech from him, full of gunpowder and glory, full of that adjective-piling, mixed metaphor and windy declamation which were regarded as eloquence in that ancient time and that remote region; and then he swore us on the Bible to be faithful to the State of Missouri and drive all invaders from her soil, no matter whence they might come or under what flag they might march. This mixed us considerably and we could not make out just what service we were embarked in, but Colonel Ralls, the practised politician and phrase-juggler, was not similarly in doubt; he knew quite clearly that he had invested us in the cause of the Southern Confederacy. He closed the solemnities by belting around me the sword which his neighbor, Colonel Brown, had worn at Bucna Vista and Molino del Rey; and he accompanied this act with another impressive blast.

Then we formed in line of battle and marched four miles to a shady and pleasant piece of woods on the border of the far-reaching expanses of a flowery prairie. It was an enchanting region for war — our kind of war.

We pierced the forest about half a mile and took up a strong position, with some low, rocky, and wooded hills behind us and a purling, limpid creek in front. Straightway half the command were in swimming and the other half fishing. The ass with the French name gave this position a romantic title but it was too long, so the boys shortened and simplified it to Camp Ralls.

We occupied an old maple-sugar camp, whose half-rotted troughs were still propped against the trees. A long corn-crib served for sleeping-quarters for the battalion. On our left, half a mile away, were Mason's farm and house, and he was a friend to the cause. Shortly after noon the farmers began to arrive from several directions with mules and horses for our use, and these they lent us for as long as the war might last, which they judged would be about three months. The animals were of all sizes, all colors, and all breeds. They were mainly young and frisky, and nobody in the command could stay on them long at a time, for we were town boys and ignorant of horsemanship. The creature that fell to my share was a very small mule, and yet so quick and active that it could throw me without difficulty, and it did this whenever I got on it. Then it would bray — stretching its neck out, laying its ears back, and spreading its jaws till you could see down to its works. It was a disagreeable animal in every way. If I took it by the bridle and tried to lead it off the grounds, it would sit down and brace back and no one could budge it. However, I was not entirely destitute of military resources and I did presently manage to spoil this game, for I had seen many a

steamboat aground in my time and knew a trick or two which even a grounded mule would be obliged to respect. There was a well by the corn-crib; so I substituted thirty fathom of rope for the bridle, and fetched him home with the windlass.

I will anticipate here sufficiently to say that we did learn to ride after some days' practice, but never well. We could not learn to like our animals; they were not choice ones and most of them had annoying peculiarities of one kind or another. Stevens's horse would carry him, when he was not noticing, under the huge excrescences which form on the trunks of oak-trees, and wipe him out of the saddle; in this way Stevens got several bad hurts. Sergeant Bowers's horse was very large and tall, with slim, long legs, and looked like a railroad bridge. His size enabled him to reach all about, and as far as he wanted to, with his head; so he was always biting Bowers's legs. On the march, in the sun, Bowers slept a good deal, and as soon as the horse recognized that he was asleep he would reach around and bite him on the leg. His legs were black and blue with bites. This was the only thing that could ever make him swear but this always did; whenever his horse bit him he always swore, and of course Stevens, who laughed at everything, laughed at this and would even get into such convulsions over it as to lose his balance and fall off his horse; and then Bowers, already irritated by the pain of the horse-bite, would resent the laughter with hard language, and there would be a quarrel; so that horse made no end of trouble and bad blood in the command.

However, I will get back to where I was — our first afternoon in the sugar-camp. The sugar-troughs came very handy as horse-troughs and we had plenty of corn to fill them with. I ordered Sergeant Bowers to feed my mule, but he said that if I reckoned he went to war to be a dry-nurse to a mule it wouldn't take me very long to find out my mistake. I believed that this was insubordination but I was full of uncertainties about everything military, and so I let the thing pass and went and ordered Smith, the blacksmith's apprentice, to feed the mule; but he merely gave me a large, cold, sarcastic grin, such as an ostensibly seven-year-old horse gives you when you lift his lip and find he is fourteen, and turned his back on me. I then went to the captain and asked if it were not right and proper and military for me to have an orderly. He said it was but as there was only one orderly in the corps, it was but right that he himself should have Bowers on his staff. Bowers said he wouldn't serve on anybody's staff, and if anybody thought he could make him, let him try it. So, of course, the thing had to be dropped; there was no other way.

Next, nobody would cook; it was considered a degradation; so we had no dinner. We lazed the rest of the pleasant afternoon away, some dozing under the trees, some smoking cob-pipes and talking sweethearts and war, some playing games. By late supper-time all hands were famished and to meet the difficulty all hands turned to on an equal footing, and gathered wood, built fires, and

cooked the meal. Afterward everything was smooth for a while; then trouble broke out between the corporal and the sergeant, each claiming to rank the other. Nobody knew which was the higher office; so Lyman had to settle the matter by making the rank of both officers equal. The commander of an ignorant crew like that has many troubles and vexations which probably do not occur in the regular army at all. However, with the song-singing and yarn-spinning around the camp-fire, everything presently became serene again, and by and by we raked the corn down level in one end of the crib and all went to bed on it, tying a horse to the door, so that he would neigh if any one tried to get in.<sup>1</sup>

We had some horsemanship drill every forenoon; then, afternoons, we rode off here and there in squads a few miles and visited the farmers' girls, and had a youthful good time and got an honest good dinner or supper, and then home again to camp, happy and content.

For a time life was idly delicious, it was perfect; there was nothing to mar it. Then came some farmers with an alarm one day. They said it was rumored that the enemy were advancing in our direction from over Hyde's prairie. The result was a sharp stir among us, and general consternation. It was a rude awakening from our pleasant trance. The rumor was but a rumor — nothing definite about it; so in the confusion we did not know which way to retreat. Lyman was for not retreating at all in these uncertain circumstances, but he found that if he tried to maintain that attitude he would fare badly, for the command were in no humor to put up with insubordination. So he yielded the point and called a council of war, to consist of himself and the three other officers; but the privates made such a fuss about being left out that we had to allow them to remain, for they were already present and doing the most of the talking too. The question was, which way to retreat; but all were so flurried that nobody seemed to have even a guess to offer. Except Lyman. He explained in a few calm words that, inasmuch as the enemy were approaching from over Hyde's prairie, our course was simple: all we had to do was not to retreat *toward* him; any other direction would answer our needs perfectly. Everybody saw in a moment how true this was, and how wise, so Lyman got a great many compliments. It was now decided that we should fall back on Mason's farm.

It was after dark by this time and as we could not know how soon the enemy might arrive, it did not seem best to try to take the horses and things with us; so we only took the guns and ammunition, and started at once. The route was very rough and hilly and rocky, and presently the night grew very black and rain

<sup>1</sup> It was always my impression that that was what the horse was there for and I know that it was also the impression of at least one other of the command, for we talked about it at the time and admired the military ingenuity of the device; but when I was out West three years ago, I was told by Mr. A. G. Fuqua, a member of our company, that the horse was his, that the leaving him tied at the door was a matter of mere forgetfulness, and that to attribute it to intelligent invention was to give him quite too much credit. In support of his position he called my attention to the suggestive fact that the artifice was not employed again. I had not thought of that before.

began to fall; so we had a troublesome time of it, struggling and stumbling along in the dark, and soon some person slipped and fell, and then the next person behind stumbled over him and fell, and so did the rest, one after the other; and then Bowers came, with the keg of powder in his arms, while the command were all mixed together, arms and legs, on the muddy slope, and so he fell, of course, with the keg, and this started the whole detachment down the hill in a body, and they landed in the brook at the bottom in a pile, and each that was undermost pulling the hair and scratching and biting those that were on top of him, and those that were being scratched and bitten scratching and biting the rest in their turn, and all saying they would die before they would ever go to war again if they ever got out of this brook this time and the invader might rot for all they cared, and the country along with him — and all such talk as that, which was dismal to hear and take part in, in such smothered, low voices, and such a grisly dark place and so wet, and the enemy, maybe, coming any moment.

The keg of powder was lost, and the guns too; so the growling and complaining continued straight along while the brigade pawed around the pasty hillside and slopped around in the brook hunting for these things; consequently we lost considerable time at this, and then we heard a sound and held our breath and listened, and it seemed to be the enemy coming, though it could have been a cow, for it had a cough like a cow; but we did not wait but left a couple of guns behind and struck out for Mason's again as briskly as we could scramble along in the dark. But we got lost presently among the rugged little ravines and wasted a deal of time finding the way again, so it was after nine when we reached Mason's stile at last; and then before we could open our mouths to give the countersign several dogs came bounding over the fence with great riot and noise, and each of them took a soldier by the slack of his trousers and began to back away with him. We could not shoot the dogs without endangering the persons they were attached to; so we had to look on helpless at what was perhaps the most mortifying spectacle of the Civil War. There was light enough and to spare, for the Masons had now run out on the porch with candles in their hands. The old man and his son came and undid the dogs without difficulty, all but Bowers's; but they couldn't undo his dog, they didn't know his combination; he was of the bull kind and seemed to be set with a Yale time-lock, but they got him loose at last with some scalding water, of which Bowers got his share and returned thanks. Peterson Dunlap afterward made up a fine name for this engagement, and also for the night march which preceded it, but both have long ago faded out of my memory.

We now went into the house and they began to ask us a world of questions, whereby it presently came out that we did not know anything concerning who or what we were running from; so the old gentleman made himself very frank and said we were a curious breed of soldiers and guessed we could be depended on to end up the war in time, because no government could stand the expense

of the shoe-leather we should cost it trying to follow us around. "Marion *Rangers*! good name, b'gosh!" said he. And wanted to know why we hadn't had a picket-guard at the place where the road entered the prairie, and why we hadn't sent out a scouting party to spy out the enemy and bring us an account of his strength, and so on, before jumping up and stampeding out of a strong position upon a mere vague rumor — and so on, and so forth, till he made us all feel shabbier than the dogs had done, not half so enthusiastically welcome. So we went to bed shamed and low-spirited, except Stevens. Soon Stevens began to devise a garment for Bowers which could be made to automatically display his battle-scars to the grateful or conceal them from the envious, according to his occasions, but Bowers was in no humor for this, so there was a fight and when it was over Stevens had some battle-scars of his own to think about.

Then we got a little sleep. But after all we had gone through, our activities were not over for the night, for about two o'clock in the morning we heard a shout of warning from down the lane, accompanied by a chorus from all the dogs, and in a moment everybody was up and flying around to find out what the alarm was about. The alarmist was a horseman who gave notice that a detachment of Union soldiers was on its way from Hannibal with orders to capture and hang any bands like ours which it could find, and said we had no time to lose. Farmer Mason was in a flurry this time himself. He hurried us out of the house with all haste, and sent one of his Negroes with us to show us where to hide ourselves and our telltale guns among the ravines half a mile away. It was raining heavily.

We struck down the lane, then across some rocky pasture-land which offered good advantages for stumbling; consequently we were down in the mud most of the time, and every time a man went down he black-guarded the war and the people that started it and everybody connected with it, and gave himself the master dose of all for being so foolish as to go into it. At last we reached the wooded mouth of a ravine, and there we huddled ourselves under the streaming trees and sent the Negro back home. It was a dismal and heart-breaking time. We were like to be drowned with the rain, deafened with the howling wind and the booming thunder, and blinded by the lightning. It was indeed a wild night. The drenching we were getting was misery enough, but a deeper misery still was the reflection that the halter might end us before we were a day older. A death of this shameful sort had not occurred to us as being among the possibilities of war. It took the romance all out of the campaign and turned our dreams of glory into a repulsive nightmare. As for doubling that so barbarous an order had been given, not one of us did that.

The long night wore itself out at last, and then the Negro came to us with the news that the alarm had manifestly been a false one and that breakfast would soon be ready. Straightway we were light-hearted again, and the world was

bright and life as full of hope and promise as ever — for we were young then. How long ago that was! Twenty-four years.

The mongrel child of philology named the night's refuge Camp Devastation and no soul objected. The Masons gave us a Missouri country breakfast in Missourian abundance, and we needed it: hot biscuits, hot "wheat bread," prettily criss-crossed in a lattice pattern on top, hot corn-pone, fried chicken, bacon, coffee, eggs, milk, buttermilk, etc., and the world may be confidently challenged to furnish the equal of such a breakfast, as it is cooked in the South.

We stayed several days at Mason's, and after all these years the memory of the dullness and stillness and lifelessness of that slumberous farm-house still oppresses my spirit as with a sense of the presence of death and mourning. There was nothing to do, nothing to think about; there was no interest in life. The male part of the household were away in the fields all day, the women were busy and out of our sight; there was no sound but the plaintive wailing of a spinning-wheel, forever moaning out from some distant room, the most lonesome sound in nature, a sound steeped and sodden with homesickness and the emptiness of life. The family went to bed about dark every night, and as we were not invited to intrude any new customs we naturally followed theirs. Those nights were a hundred years long to youths accustomed to being up till twelve. We lay awake and miserable till that hour every time, and grew old and decrepit waiting through the still eternities for the clock-strikes. This was no place for town boys. So at last it was with something very like joy that we received news that the enemy were on our track again. With a new birth of the old warrior spirit we sprang to our places in line of battle and fell back on Camp Ralls.

Captain Lyman had taken a hint from Mason's talk, and he now gave orders that our camp should be guarded against surprise by the posting of pickets. I was ordered to place a picket at the forks of the road in Hyde's prairie. Night shut down black and threatening. I told Sergeant Bowers to go out to that place and stay till midnight and, just as I was expecting, he said he wouldn't do it. I tried to get others to go but all refused. Some excused themselves on account of the weather, but the rest were frank enough to say they wouldn't go in any kind of weather. This kind of thing sounds odd now, and impossible, but there was no surprise in it at the time. On the contrary, it seemed a perfectly natural thing to do. There were scores of little camps scattered over Missouri where the same thing was happening. These camps were composed of young men who had been born and reared to a sturdy independence, and who did not know what it meant to be ordered around by Tom, Dick, and Harry, whom they had known familiarly all their lives in the village or on the farm. It is quite within the probabilities that this same thing was happening all over the South. James Redpath recognized the justice of this assumption and furnished the following instance in support of it. During a short stay in East Tennessee he was in a citizen colo-

nel's tent one day talking, when a big private appeared at the door and, without salute or other circumlocution, said to the colonel:

"Say, Jim, I'm a-goin' home for a few days."

"What for?"

"Well, I hain't b'en there for a right smart while and I'd like to see how things is comin' on."

"How long are you going to be gone?"

"'Bout two weeks."

"Well, don't be gone longer than that, and get back sooner if you can."

That was all, and the citizen officer resumed his conversation where the private had broken it off. This was in the first months of the war, of course. The camps in our part of Missouri were under Brigadier-General Thomas H. Harris. He was a townsman of ours, a first-rate fellow and well liked, but we had all familiarly known him as the sole and modest-salaried operator in our telegraph-office, where he had to send about one despatch a week in ordinary times and two when there was a rush of business; consequently, when he appeared in our midst one day on the wing, and delivered a military command of some sort in a large military fashion, nobody was surprised at the response which he got from the assembled soldiery.

"Oh, now, what'll you take to *don't*, Tom Harris?"

It was quite the natural thing. One might justly imagine that we were hopeless material for war. And so we seemed in our ignorant state, but there were those among us who afterward learned the grim trade, learned to obey like machines, became valuable soldiers; fought all through the war, and came out at the end with excellent records. One of the very boys who refused to go out on picket duty that night and called me an ass for thinking he would expose himself to danger in such a foolhardy way, had become distinguished for intrepidity before he was a year older.

I did secure my picket that night, not by authority but by diplomacy. I got Bowers to go by agreeing to exchange ranks with him for the time being, and go along and stand the watch with him as his subordinate. We stayed out there a couple of dreary hours in the pitchy darkness and the rain, with nothing to modify the dreariness but Bowers's monotonous growlings at the war and the weather; then we began to nod and presently found it next to impossible to stay in the saddle, so we gave up the tedious job and went back to the camp without waiting for the relief guard. We rode into camp without interruption or objection from anybody and the enemy could have done the same, for there were no sentries. Everybody was asleep; at midnight there was nobody to send out another picket, so none was sent. We never tried to establish a watch at night again, as far as I remember, but we generally kept a picket out in the daytime.

In that camp the whole command slept on the corn in the big corn-crib and

there was usually a general row before morning, for the place was full of rats and they would scramble over the boys' bodies and faces, annoying and irritating everybody, and now and then they would bite some one's toe, and the person who owned the toe would start up and magnify his English and begin to throw corn in the dark. The ears were half as heavy as bricks and when they struck they hurt. The persons struck would respond and inside of five minutes every man would be locked in a death-grip with his neighbor. There was a grievous deal of blood shed in the corn-crib but this was all that was spilt while I was in the war. No, that is not quite true. But for one circumstance it would have been all. I will come to that now.

Our scares were frequent. Every few days rumors would come that the enemy were approaching. In these cases we always fell back on some other camp of ours; we never stayed where we were. But the rumors always turned out to be false, so at last even we began to grow indifferent to them. One night a Negro was sent to our corn-crib with the same old warning, the enemy was hovering in our neighborhood. We all said let him hover. We resolved to stay still and be comfortable. It was a fine warlike resolution, and no doubt we all felt the stir of it in our veins — for a moment. We had been having a very jolly time, that was full of horse-play and school-boy hilarity, but that cooled down now and presently the fast-waning fire of forced jokes and forced laughs died out altogether and the company became silent. Silent and nervous. And soon uneasy — worried — apprehensive. We had said we would stay and we were committed. We could have been persuaded to go but there was nobody brave enough to suggest it. An almost noiseless movement presently began in the dark by a general but unvoiced impulse. When the movement was completed each man knew that he was not the only person who had crept to the front wall and had his eye at a crack between the logs. No, we were all there, all there with our hearts in our throats and staring out toward the sugar-troughs where the forest footpath came through. It was late and there was a deep woodsy stillness everywhere. There was a veiled moonlight, which was only just strong enough to enable us to mark the general shape of objects. Presently a muffled sound caught our ears and we recognized it as the hoof-beats of a horse or horses. And right away a figure appeared in the forest path; it could have been made of smoke, its mass had so little sharpness of outline. It was a man on horseback and it seemed to me that there were others behind him. I got hold of a gun in the dark, and pushed it through a crack between the logs, hardly knowing what I was doing, I was so dazed with fright. Somebody said "Fire!" I pulled the trigger. I seemed to see a hundred flashes and hear a hundred reports; then I saw the man fall down out of the saddle. My first feeling was of surprised gratification; my first impulse was an apprentice-sportsman's impulse to run and pick up his game. Somebody said, hardly audibly, "Good — we've got him! — wait for the rest." But the rest did not come. We waited — listened — still no more came.



There was not a sound, not the whisper of a leaf; just perfect stillness, an uncanny kind of stillness which was all the more uncanny on account of the damp, earthy, late-night smells now rising and pervading it. Then, wondering, we crept stealthily out and approached the man. When we got to him the moon revealed him distinctly. He was lying on his back with his arms abroad, his mouth was open and his chest heaving with long gasps, and his white shirt-front was all splashed with blood. The thought shot through me that I was a murderer, that I had killed a man, a man who had never done me any harm. That was the coldest sensation that ever went through my marrow. I was down by him in a moment, helplessly stroking his forehead, and I would have given anything then — my own life freely — to make him again what he had been five minutes before. And all the boys seemed to be feeling in the same way; they hung over him, full of pitying interest, and tried all they could to help him and said all sorts of regretful things. They had forgotten all about the enemy, they thought only of this one forlorn unit of the foe. Once my imagination persuaded me that the dying man gave me a reproachful look out of his shadowy eyes, and it seemed to me that I could rather he had stabbed me than done that. He muttered and mumbled like a dreamer in his sleep about his wife and his child, and I thought with a new despair, "This thing that I have done does not end with him; it falls upon *them* too, and they never did me any harm, any more than he."

In a little while the man was dead. He was killed in war, killed in fair and legitimate war, killed in battle, as you may say, and yet he was as sincerely mourned by the opposing force as if he had been their brother. The boys stood there a half-hour sorrowing over him and recalling the details of the tragedy, and wondering who he might be and if he were a spy, and saying that if it were to do over again they would not hurt him unless he attacked them first. It soon came out that mine was not the only shot fired; there were five others, a division of the guilt which was a great relief to me since it in some degree lightened and diminished the burden I was carrying. There were six shots fired at once but I was not in my right mind at the time, and my heated imagination had magnified my one shot into a volley.

The man was not in uniform and was not armed. He was a stranger in the country, that was all we ever found out about him. The thought of him got to preying upon me every night; I could not get rid of it. I could not drive it away, the taking of that unoffending life seemed such a wanton thing. And it seemed an epitome of war, that all war must be just that—the killing of strangers against whom you feel no personal animosity, strangers whom in other circumstances you would help if you found them in trouble, and who would help you if you needed it. My campaign was spoiled. It seemed to me that I was not rightly equipped for this awful business, that war was intended for men and I for a child's nurse. I resolved to retire from this avocation of sham soldiery while I could save some remnant of my self-respect. These morbid thoughts clung to

me against reason, for at bottom I did not believe I had touched that man. The law of probabilities decreed me guiltless of his blood for in all my small experience with guns I had never hit anything I had tried to hit and I knew I had done my best to hit him. Yet there was no solace in the thought. Against a diseased imagination demonstration goes for nothing.

The rest of my war experience was of a piece with what I have already told of it. We kept monotonously falling back upon one camp or another and eating up the farmers and their families. They ought to have shot us; on the contrary, they were as hospitably kind and courteous to us as if we had deserved it. In one of these camps we found Ab Grimes, an Upper Mississippi pilot who afterward became famous as a dare-devil rebel spy, whose career bristled with desperate adventures. The look and style of his comrades suggested that they had not come into the war to play and their deeds made good the conjecture later. They were fine horsemen and good revolver shots, but their favorite arm was the lasso. Each had one at his pommel and could snatch a man out of the saddle with it every time, on a full gallop, at any reasonable distance.

In another camp the chief was a fierce and profane old blacksmith of sixty and he had furnished his twenty recruits with gigantic home-made bowie-knives, to be swung with two hands like the *machetes* of the Isthmus. It was a grisly spectacle to see that earnest band practising their murderous cuts and slashes under the eye of that remorseless old fanatic.

The last camp which we fell back upon was in a hollow near the village of Florida where I was born, in Monroe County. Here we were warned one day that a Union colonel was sweeping down on us with a whole regiment at his heel. This looked decidedly serious. Our boys went apart and consulted; then we went back and told the other companies present that the war was a disappointment to us and we were going to disband. They were getting ready themselves to fall back on some place or other, and we were only waiting for General Tom Harris, who was expected to arrive at any moment, so they tried to persuade us to wait a little while but the majority of us said no, we were accustomed to falling back and didn't need any of Tom Harris's help, we could get along perfectly well without him and save time, too. So about half of our fifteen, including myself, mounted and left on the instant; the others yielded to persuasion and stayed — stayed through the war.

An hour later we met General Harris on the road, with two or three people in his company, his staff probably, but we could not tell; none of them were in uniform; uniforms had not come into vogue among us yet. Harris ordered us back but we told him there was a Union colonel coming with a whole regiment in his wake and it looked as if there was going to be a disturbance, so we had concluded to go home. He raged a little but it was of no use, our minds were made up. We had done our share, had killed one man, exterminated one army, such as it was; let him go and kill the rest and that would end the war. I did not

see that brisk young general again until last year; then he was wearing white hair and whiskers.

In time I came to know that Union colonel whose coming frightened me out of the war and crippled the Southern cause to that extent — General Grant. I came within a few hours of seeing him when he was as unknown as I was myself; at a time when anybody could have said, “Grant? — Ulysses S. Grant? I do not remember hearing the name before.” It seems difficult to realize that there was once a time when such a remark could be rationally made but there *was*, and I was within a few miles of the place and the occasion too, though proceeding in the other direction.

The thoughtful will not throw this war paper of mine lightly aside as being valueless. It has this value: it is a not unfair picture of what went on in many and many a militia camp in the first months of the rebellion, when the green recruits were without discipline, without the steadying and heartening influence of trained leaders, when all their circumstances were new and strange and charged with exaggerated terrors, and before the invaluable experience of actual collision in the field had turned them from rabbits into soldiers. If this side of the picture of that early day has not before been put into history, then history has been to that degree incomplete, for it had and has its rightful place there. There was more Bull Run material scattered through the early camps of this country than exhibited itself at Bull Run. And yet it learned its trade presently and helped to fight the great battles later. I could have become a soldier myself if I had waited. I had got part of it learned, I knew more about retreating than the man that invented retreating.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Which side did Mark Twain favor at the start of the Civil War?
2. What incidents show the lack of discipline among the Marion Rangers?
3. What does Peterson d’Un Lap’s name reveal about his character?
4. What effect did the killing of the horseman have on the company?

*E. B. White, outstanding contemporary essayist and writer of the distinguished "Talk of the Town" editorials in The New Yorker, has been described by his friend Thurber as "a poet who loves to live half-hidden from the eye." He has divided his time between New York and the Maine farm to which he retired in the 1930's. In this piece he collaborated with Richard Lee Strout, another New Yorker contributor, under the pen name Lee Strout White.*

I see by the new Sears Roebuck catalogue that it is still possible to buy an axle for a 1909 Model T Ford, but I am not deceived. The great days have faded, the end is in sight. Only one page in the current catalogue is devoted to parts and accessories for the Model T; yet everyone remembers springtimes when the Ford gadget section was larger than men's clothing, almost as large as household furnishings. The last Model T was built in 1927, and the car is fading from what scholars call the American scene — which is an understatement, because to a few million people who grew up with it, the old Ford practically *was* the American scene.

It was the miracle God had wrought. And it was patently the sort of thing that could only happen once. Mechanically uncanny, it was like nothing that had ever come to the world before. Flourishing industries rose and fell with it. As a vehicle, it was hard-working, commonplace, heroic; and it often seemed to transmit those qualities to the persons who rode in it. My own generation identifies it with Youth, with its gaudy, irretrievable excitements; before it fades into the mist, I would like to pay it the tribute of the sigh that is not a sob, and set down random entries in a shape somewhat less cumbersome than a Sears Roebuck catalogue.

The Model T was distinguished from all other makes of cars by the fact that its transmission was of a type known as planetary — which was half metaphysics, half sheer friction. Engineers accepted the word "planetary" in its epicyclic sense, but I was always conscious that it also meant "wandering," "erratic." Because of the peculiar nature of this planetary element, there was always, in Model T, a certain dull rapport between engine and wheels, and even when the car was in a state known as neutral, it trembled with a deep imperative and tended to inch forward. There was never a moment when the bands were not faintly egging the machine on. In this respect it was like a horse, rolling the bit on its tongue, and country people brought to it the same technique they used with draft animals.

Its most remarkable quality was its rate of acceleration. In its palmy days the Model T could take off faster than anything on the road. The reason was simple. To get under way, you simply hooked the third finger of the right hand around a lever on the steering column, pulled down hard, and shoved your left foot forcibly against the low-speed pedal. These were simple, positive motions; the car responded by lunging forward with a roar. After a few seconds of this turmoil, you took your toe off the pedal, eased up a mite on the throttle, and the car, possessed of only two forward speeds, catapulted directly into high with a series of ugly jerks and was off on its glorious errand. The abruptness of this departure was never equalled in other cars of the period. The human leg was (and still is) incapable of letting in a clutch with anything like the forthright abandon that used to send Model T on its way. Letting in a clutch is a negative, hesitant motion, depending on delicate nervous control; pushing down the Ford pedal was a simple, country motion — an expansive act, which came as natural as kicking an old door to make it budge.

The driver of the old Model T was a man enthroned. The car, with top up, stood seven feet high. The driver sat on top of the gas tank, brooding it with his own body. When he wanted gasoline, he alighted, along with everything else in the front seat; the seat was pulled off, the metal cap unscrewed, and a wooden stick thrust down to sound the liquid in the well. There were always a couple of these sounding sticks kicking around in the ratty sub-cushion regions of a flivver. Refuelling was more of a social function then, because the driver had to unbend, whether he wanted to or not. Directly in front of the driver was the windshield — high, uncompromisingly erect. Nobody talked about air resistance, and the four cylinders pushed the car through the atmosphere with a simple disregard of physical law.

There was this about a Model T: the purchaser never regarded his purchase as a complete, finished product. When you bought a Ford, you figured you had a start — a vibrant, spirited framework to which could be screwed an almost limitless assortment of decorative and functional hardware. Driving away from the agency, hugging the new wheel between your knees, you were already full of creative worry. A Ford was born naked as a baby, and a flourishing industry grew up out of correcting its rare deficiencies and combatting its fascinating diseases. Those were the great days of lily-painting. I have been looking at some old Sears Roebuck catalogues, and they bring everything back so clear.

First you bought a Ruby Safety Reflector for the rear, so that your posterior would glow in another car's brilliance. Then you invested thirty-nine cents in some radiator Moto Wings, a popular ornament which gave the Pegasus touch to the machine and did something godlike to the owner. For nine cents you bought a fan-belt guide to keep the belt from slipping off the pulley.

You bought a radiator compound to stop leaks. This was as much a part of everybody's equipment as aspirin tablets are of a medicine cabinet. You bought

special oil to prevent chattering, a clamp-on dash light, a patching outfit, a tool box which you bolted to the running board, a sun visor, a steering-column brace to keep the column rigid, and a set of emergency containers for gas, oil, and water — three thin, disc-like cans which reposed in a case on the running board during long, important journeys — red for gas, gray for water, green for oil. It was only a beginning. After the car was about a year old, steps were taken to check the alarming disintegration. (Model T was full of tumors, but they were benign.) A set of anti-rattlers (98c) was a popular panacea. You hooked them on to the gas and spark rods, to the brake pull rod, and to the steering-rod connections. Hood silencers, of black rubber, were applied to the fluttering hood. Shock-absorbers and snubbers gave “complete relaxation.” Some people bought rubber pedal pads, to fit over the standard metal pedals. (I didn’t like these, I remember.) Persons of a suspicious or pugnacious turn of mind bought a rear-view mirror; but most Model T owners weren’t worried by what was coming from behind because they would soon enough see it out in front. They rode in a state of cheerful catalepsy. Quite a large mutinous clique among Ford owners went over to a foot accelerator (you could buy one and screw it to the floor board), but there was a certain madness in these people, because the Model T, just as she stood, had a choice of three foot pedals to push, and there were plenty of moments when both feet were occupied in the routine performance of duty and when the only way to speed up the engine was with the hand throttle.

Gadget bred gadget. Owners not only bought ready-made gadgets, they invented gadgets to meet special needs. I myself drove my car directly from the agency to the blacksmith’s, and had the smith affix two enormous iron brackets to the port running board to support an army trunk.

People who owned closed models builded along different lines: they bought ball grip handles for opening doors, window anti-rattlers, and de-luxe flower vases of the cut-glass anti-splash type. People with delicate sensibilities garnished their car with a device called the Donna Lee Automobile Disseminator — a porous vase guaranteed, according to Sears, to fill the car with a “faint clean odor of lavender.” The gap between open cars and closed cars was not as great then as it is now: for \$11.95, Sears Roebuck converted your touring car into a sedan and you went forth renewed. One agreeable quality of the old Fords was that they had no bumpers, and their fenders softened and wilted with the years and permitted the driver to squeeze in and out of tight places.

Tires were 30 x 3½, cost about twelve dollars, and punctured readily. Everybody carried a Jiffy patching set, with a nutmeg grater to roughen the tube before the goo was spread on. Everybody was capable of putting on a patch, expected to have to, and did have to.

During my association with Model T’s, self-starters were not a prevalent accessory. They were expensive and under suspicion. Your car came equipped with a serviceable crank, and the first thing you learned was how to Get Results.

It was a special trick, and until you learned it (usually from another Ford owner, but sometimes by a period of appalling experimentation) you might as well have been winding up an awning. The trick was to leave the ignition switch off, proceed to the animal's head, pull the choke (which was a little wire protruding through the radiator), and give the crank two or three nonchalant upward lifts. Then, whistling as though thinking about something else, you would saunter back to the driver's cabin, turn the ignition on, return to the crank, and this time, catching it on the down stroke, give it a quick spin with plenty of That. If this procedure was followed, the engine almost always responded — first with a few scattered explosions, then with a tumultuous gunfire, which you checked by racing around to the driver's seat and retarding the throttle. Often, if the emergency brake hadn't been pulled all the way back, the car advanced on you the instant the first explosion occurred and you would hold it back by leaning your weight against it. I can still feel my old Ford nuzzling me at the curb, as though looking for an apple in my pocket.

In zero weather, ordinary cranking became an impossibility, except for giants. The oil thickened, and it became necessary to jack up the rear wheels, which, for some planetary reason, eased the throw.

The lore and legend that governed the Ford were boundless. Owners had their own theories about everything; they discussed mutual problems in that wise, infinitely resourceful way old women discuss rheumatism. Exact knowledge was pretty scarce, and often proved less effective than superstition. Dropping a camphor ball into the gas tank was a popular expedient; it seemed to have a tonic effect on both man and machine. There wasn't much to base exact knowledge on. The Ford driver flew blind. He didn't know the temperature of his engine, the speed of his car, the amount of his fuel, or the pressure of his oil (the old Ford lubricated itself by what was amiably described as the "splash system"). A speedometer cost money and was an extra, like a windshield-wiper. The dashboard of the early models was bare save for an ignition key; later models, grown effete, boasted an ammeter which pulsed alarmingly with the throbbing of the car. Under the dash was a box of coils, with vibrators which you adjusted, or thought you adjusted. Whatever the driver learned of his motor, he learned not through instruments but through sudden developments. I remember that the timer was one of the vital organs about which there was ample doctrine. When everything else had been checked, you "had a look" at the timer. It was an extravagantly odd little device, simple in construction, mysterious in function. It contained a roller, held by a spring, and there were four contact points on the inside of the case against which, many people believed, the roller rolled. I have had a timer apart on a sick Ford many times, but I never really knew what I was up to — I was just showing off before God. There were almost as many schools of thought as there were timers. Some people, when things went wrong, just clenched their teeth and gave the timer a smart crack with a wrench. Other

people opened it up and blew on it. There was a school that held that the timer needed large amounts of oil; they fixed it by frequent baptism. And there was a school that was positive it was meant to run dry as a bone; these people were continually taking it off and wiping it. I remember once spitting into a timer; not in anger, but in a spirit of research. You see, the Model T driver moved in the realm of metaphysics. He believed his car could be hexed.

One reason the Ford anatomy was never reduced to an exact science was that, having "fixed" it, the owner couldn't honestly claim that the treatment had brought about the cure. There were too many authenticated cases of Fords fixing themselves — restored naturally to health after a short rest. Farmers soon discovered this, and it fitted nicely with their draft-horse philosophy: "Let 'er cool off and she'll snap into it again."

A Ford owner had Number One Bearing constantly in mind. This bearing, being at the front end of the motor, was the one that always burned out, because the oil didn't reach it when the car was climbing hills. (That's what I was always told, anyway.) The oil used to recede and leave Number One dry as a clam flat; you had to watch that bearing like a hawk. It was like a weak heart — you could hear it start knocking, and that was when you stopped and let her cool off. Try as you would to keep the oil supply right, in the end Number One always went out. "Number One Bearing burned out on me and I had to have her replaced," you would say, wisely; and your companions always had a lot to tell about how to protect and pamper Number One to keep her alive.

Sprinkled not too liberally among the millions of amateur witch doctors who drove Fords and applied their own abominable cures were the heaven-sent mechanics who could really make the car talk. These professionals turned up in undreamed-of spots. One time, on the banks of the Columbia River in Washington, I heard the rear end go out of my Model T when I was trying to whip it up a steep incline onto the deck of a ferry. Something snapped; the car slid backward into the mud. It seemed to me like the end of the trail. But the captain of the ferry, observing the withered remnant, spoke up.

"What's got her?" he asked.

"I guess it's the rear end," I replied, listlessly. The captain leaned over the rail and stared. Then I saw that there was a hunger in his eyes that set him off from other men.

"Tell you what," he said, carelessly, trying to cover up his eagerness, "let's pull the son of a bitch up onto the boat, and I'll help you fix her while we're going back and forth on the river."

We did just this. All that day I plied between the towns of Pasco and Kennewick, while the skipper (who had once worked in a Ford garage) directed the amazing work of resetting the bones of my car.

Springtime in the heyday of the Model T was a delirious season. Owning a car was still a major excitement, roads were still wonderful and bad. The Fords



were obviously conceived in madness: any car which was capable of going from forward into reverse without any perceptible mechanical hiatus was bound to be a mighty challenging thing to the human imagination. Boys used to veer them off the highway into a level pasture and run wild with them, as though they were cutting up with a girl. Most everybody used the reverse pedal quite as much as the regular foot brake — it distributed the wear over the bands and wore them all down evenly. That was the big trick, to wear all the bands down evenly, so that the final chattering would be total and the whole unit scream for renewal.

The days were golden, the nights were dim and strange. I still recall with trembling those loud, nocturnal crises when you drew up to a signpost and raced the engine so the lights would be bright enough to read destinations by. I have never been really planetary since. I suppose it's time to say good-bye. Farewell, my lovely!

#### QUESTIONS

1. What effect did the Model T's "planetary" transmission have on the car when it was in neutral? when it was accelerating?
2. What were some tender spots in the Model T's "anatomy" -- sources of trouble?
3. At what places in the essay is the romantic quality of the Model T especially brought out? How do the authors put across its "character"?

George and Helen Waite Papashvily

## Anything Can Happen

*George Papashvily, son of a peasant in southern Russia, sharpshooter on the Turkish front during the First World War, came to America by way of Constantinople in the 1920's and eventually married an American girl of New England ancestry, Helen Waite. Anything Can Happen, written by Helen Papashvily with the flavor of her husband's English in 1945, is the warm-hearted saga of his adventures; when Helen heard that it had been selected by the Book-of-the-Month-Club, she ran out of their Pennsylvania farmhouse to tell George, who was repairing the roof—"Only he was sitting on top of the ridgepole and I was afraid if I told him he might fall off."*

At five in the morning the engines stopped, and after thirty-seven days the boat was quiet.

We were in America.

I got up and stepped over the other men and looked out the porthole. Water and fog. We were anchoring off an island. I dressed and went on deck.

Now began my troubles. What to do? This was a Greek boat and I was steerage, so of course by the time we were half way out I had spent all my landing money for extra food.

Hassan, the Turk, one of the six who slept in the cabin with me, came up the ladder.

"I told you so," he said as soon as he saw me. "Now we are in America and you have no money to land. They send you home. No money, no going ashore. What a disgrace. In your position, frankly, I would kill myself."

Hassan had been satisfied to starve on black olives and salt cheese all the way from Gibraltar, and he begrudged every skewer of lamb I bribed away from the first-cabin steward.

We went down the gangplank into the big room. Passengers with pictures in their hands was rushing around to match them to a relative. Before their tables the inspectors was busy with long lines of people.

The visitors' door opened and fellow with big pile of caps, striped blue and white cotton caps with visors and a top button, came in. He went first to an old man with a karakul hat near the window, then to a Cossack in the line. At last he came to me.

"Look," he said in Russian, "look at your hat. You want to be a greenhorn all your life? A karakul hat! Do you expect to see anybody in the U.S.A. still

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with a fur hat? The customs inspector, the doctor, the captain — are they wearing fur hats? Certainly not.”

I didn't say anything.

“Look,” he said. “I'm sorry for you. I was a greenhorn once myself. I wouldn't want to see anybody make my mistakes. Look, I have caps. See, from such rich striped material. Like wears railroad engineers, and house painters, and coal miners.” He spun one around on his finger. “Don't be afraid. It's a cap in real American style. With this cap on your head, they couldn't tell you from a citizen. I'm positively guaranteeing. And I'm trading you this cap even for your old karakul hat. Trading even. You don't have to give me one penny.”

Now it is true I bought my karakul *coudie* new for the trip. It was a fine skin, a silver lamb, and in Georgia it would have lasted me a lifetime. Still —

“I'll tell you,” the cap man said. “So you can remember all your life you made money the first hour you were in America, I give you a cap and a dollar besides. Done?”

I took off my *coudie* and put on his cap. It was small and sat well up on my head, but then in America one dresses like an American and it is a satisfaction always to be in the best style. So I got my first dollar.

Ysaacs, a Syrian, sat on the bench and smoked brown paper cigarettes and watched all through the bargain. He was from our cabin, too, and he knew I was worried about the money to show the examiners. But now, as soon as the cap man went on to the next customer, Ysaacs explained a way to get by the examiners — a good way.

Such a very good way, in fact, that when the inspector looked over my passport and entry permit I was ready.

“Do you have friends meeting you?” he asked me. “Do you have money to support yourself?”

I pulled out a round fat roll of green American money — tens, twenties — a nice thick pile with a rubber band around.

“O.K.,” he said. “Go ahead.” He stamped my papers.

I got my baggage and took the money roll back again to Ysaacs' friend, Arapouleopolus, the money lender, so he could rent it over again to another man. One dollar was all he charged to use it for each landing. Really a bargain.

On the outer platform I met Zurabeg, an Ossetian, who had been down in steerage, too. But Zurabeg was no greenhorn coming for the first time. Zurabeg was an American citizen with papers to prove it, and a friend of Gospadin Buffalo Bill besides. This Zurabeg came first to America twenty years before as a trick show rider, and later he was boss cook on the road with the Gospadin Buffalo Bill. Every few years, Zurabeg, whenever he saved enough money, went home to find a wife — but so far with no luck.

“Can't land?” he asked me.

“No, I can land,” I said, “but I have no money to pay the little boat to carry

me to shore." A small boat went chuffing back and forth taking off the discharged passengers. "I try to make up my mind to swim, but if I swim how will I carry my baggage? It would need two trips at least."

"Listen, donkey-head," Zurabeg said, "This is America. The carrying boat is free. It belongs to my government. They take us for nothing. Come on."

So we got to the shore.

And there — the streets, the people, the noise! The faces flashing by — and by again. The screams and chatter and cries. But most of all the motion, back and forth, back and forth, pressing deeper and deeper on my eyeballs.

We walked a few blocks through this before I remembered my landing cards and passport and visas. I took them out and tore them into little pieces and threw them all in an ash can. "They can't prove I'm not a citizen, now," I said, "What do we do next?"

"We get jobs," Zurabeg told me. "I show you."

We went to an employment agency. Conveniently, the man spoke Russian. He gave Zurabeg ticket right away to start in Russian restaurant as first cook.

"Now, your friend? What can you do?" he asked me.

"I," I said, "am a worker in decorative leathers particularly specializing in the ornamenting of crop handles according to the traditional designs."

"My God!" the man said. "This is the U.S.A. No horses. Automobiles. What else can you do?"

Fortunately my father was a man of great foresight and I have two trades. His idea was that in the days when a man starves with one, by the other he may eat.

"I am also," I said, "a swordmaker. Short blades or long; daggers with or without chasing; hunting knives, plain or ornamented; tempering, fitting, pointing —" I took my certificate of successful completion of apprenticeship out of my *chemidon*.

"My God! A crop maker — a sword pointer. You better take him along for a dishwasher," he said to Zurabeg. "They can always use another dishwasher."

We went down into the earth and flew through tunnels in a train. It was like the caves under the Kazbeck where the giant bats sleep, and it smelled even worse.

The restaurant was on a side street and the lady-owner, the *hasaika*, spoke kindly. "I remember you from the tearoom," she said to Zurabeg. "I congratulate myself on getting you. You are excellent on the *piroshkis*, isn't it?"

"On everything, madame," Zurabeg said grandly. "On everything. Buffalo Bill, an old friend of mine, has eaten thirty of my *piroshkis* at a meal. My friend —" he waved toward me — "will be a dishwasher."

I made a bow.

The kitchen was small and hot and fat — like inside of a pig's stomach.

Zurabeg unpacked his knives, put on his cap, and, at home at once, started to dice celery.

"You can wash these," the *hasaika* said to me. "At four we have party."

It was a trayful of glasses. And such glasses — thin bubbles that would hardly hold a sip — set on stems. The first one snapped in my hand, the second dissolved, the third to tenth I got washed, the eleventh was already cracked, the twelfth rang once on the pan edge and was silent.

Perhaps I might be there yet, but just as I carried the first trayful to the service slot, the restaurant cat ran between my feet.

When I got all the glass swept up, I told Zurabeg, "Now, we have to eat. It's noon. I watch the customers eat. It makes me hungry. Prepare a *shashlik* and some cucumbers, and we enjoy our first meal for good luck in the New World."

"This is a restaurant," Zurabeg said, "not a *duquani* on the side of the Georgian road where the proprietor and the house eat with the guests together at one table. This is a restaurant with very strict organization. We get to eat when the customers go, and you get what the customers leave. Try again with the glasses and remember my reputation. Please."

I found a quart of sour cream and went into the back alley and ate that and some bread and a jar of caviar which was very salty — packed for export, no doubt.

The *hasaika* found me. I stood up. "Please," she said, "please go on. Eat sour cream. But after, could you go away? Far away? With no hard feelings. The glasses — the caviar — it's expensive for me — and at the same time I don't want to make your friend mad. I need a good cook. If you could just go away? Quietly? Just disappear, so to speak? I give you five dollars."

"I didn't do anything," I said, "so you don't have to pay me. All in all, a restaurant probably isn't my fate. You can tell Zurabeg afterward."

She brought my cap and a paper bag. I went down through the alley and into the street. I walked. I walked until my feet took fire in my shoes and my neck ached from looking. I walked for hours. I couldn't even be sure it was the same day. I tried some English on a few men that passed. "What watch?" I said. But they pushed by me so I knew I had it wrong. I tried another man. "How many clock?" He showed me on his wrist. Four-thirty.

A wonderful place. Rapidly, if one applies oneself, one speaks the English.

I came to a park and went in and found a place under a tree and took off my shoes and lay down. I looked in the bag the *hasaika* gave me. A sandwich from bologna and a nickel — to begin in America with.

What to do? While I decided, I slept.

A policeman was waking me up. He spoke. I shook my head I can't understand. Then with hands, with legs, rolling his eyes, turning his head, with motions, with gestures (really he was as good as marionettes I saw once in Tiflis),

he showed me to lie on the grass is forbidden. But one is welcome to the seats instead. All free seats in this park. No charge for anybody. What a country.

But I was puzzled. There were iron arm rests every two feet along the benches. How could I distribute myself under them? I tried one leg. Then the other. But when I was under, how could I turn around? Then, whatever way I got in, my chin was always caught by the hoop. While I thought this over, I walked and bought peanuts for my nickel and fed the squirrels.

Lights began to come on in the towers around the park. It was almost dark. I found a sandy patch under a rock on little bluff above the drive. I cut a *shashlik* stick and built a fire of twigs and broiled my bologna over it and ate the bread. It lasted very short. Then I rolled up my coat for a pillow like the days during the war and went to sleep.

I was tired from America and I slept some hours. It must have been almost midnight when the light flashed in my face. I sat up. It was from the head lamp of a touring car choking along on the road below me. While I watched, the engine coughed and died. A man got out. For more than an hour he knocked with tools and opened the hood and closed it again.

Then I slid down the bank. In the war there were airplanes, and of course cars are much the same except, naturally, for the wings. I showed him with my hands and feet and head, like the policeman: "Give me the tools and let me try." He handed them over and sat down on the bench.

I checked the spark plugs and the distributor, the timer and the coils. I looked at the feed line, at the ignition, at the gas. In between, I cranked. I cranked until I cranked my heart out onto the ground. Still the car wouldn't move.

I got mad. I cursed it. I cursed it for a son of a mountain devi. I cursed it for the carriage of the diavels in the cave. I cursed it by the black-horned goat, and when I finished all I knew in Georgian I said it again in Russian to pick up the loose ends. Then I kicked the radiator as hard as I could. The car was old Model T, and it started with a snort that shook the chassis like an aspen.

The man came running up. He was laughing and he shook my hands and talked at me and asked questions. But the policeman's method didn't work. Signs weren't enough. I remembered my dictionary — English-Russian, Russian-English — it went both ways. I took it from my blouse pocket and showed the man. Holding it under the headlights, he thumbed through.

"Work?" he found in English.

I looked at the Russian word beside it and shook my head.

"Home?" he turned to that.

"No," again.

I took the dictionary. "Boat. Today."

"Come home —" he showed me the words — "with me —" he pointed to himself. "Eat. Sleep. Job." It took him quite a time between words. "Job. Tomorrow."

“Automobiles?” I said. We have the same word in Georgian.

“Automobiles!” He was pleased we found one word together.

We got in his car, and he took me through miles and miles of streets with houses on both sides of every one of them until we came to his own. We went in and we ate and we drank and ate and drank again. For that, fortunately, you need no words.

Then his wife showed me a room and I went to bed. As I fell asleep, I thought to myself: Well, now, I have lived one whole day in America and -- just like they say — America is a country where anything, anything at all can happen.

And in twenty years — about this — I never changed my mind.

#### QUESTIONS

1. How was Papashvily cheated even before he had landed in the United States?
2. What “was like the caves under the Kazbeck where the giant bats sleep, and it smelled even worse”?
3. Why didn't Papashvily's two trades help him in getting a job in America?
4. Which incident in this selection do you consider most typically American?

*Mary Ellen Chase, novelist and essayist, was born and raised at Blue Hill, Maine. She was educated at Blue Hill Academy, the University of Maine, and the University of Minnesota, where she received her doctorate in English in 1922. From 1926 until her retirement in 1955, she was Professor of English at Smith College. The northern stretches of the Maine coast and its seafaring people were the inspiration for her best-known novels, such as Mary Peters (1934), Silas Crockett (1935), and Windswept (1941). She is also the author of two volumes of reminiscence, A Goodly Heritage (1932) and A Goodly Fellowship (1939), and of The Bible and the Common Reader (1944).*

When my father was born in 1861, he was named Edward Everett, after the “silver-tongued” orator of that time. The possession of this name may conceivably have turned his thoughts and ambitions toward the writing and delivering of public addresses; but I am inclined to think that even without its stimulus he would have cherished such desires. For he was by nature drawn toward the eloquent use of language, and it was his habit while dressing, or descending the stairs for breakfast, or doing his chores in the barn, to declaim lines from Thucydides or Macaulay, Cicero against Catiline, Patrick Henry or Abraham Lincoln. He could shout “Give me liberty or give me death!” so that one actually believed he was ready for instant extinction, which he most surely was not, being singularly and almost inordinately gifted with a love of life. He loved rolling periods, rhetorical questions, fervent imperatives, and intricate, often mixed metaphors. He would be sadly out of place today when eloquence in its old sense has become more than slightly ridiculous and “elocution” practically banned from both the language and its use.

My father was frequently in demand during my childhood as a public speaker for Memorial Day. Not only did the selectmen of Maine towns and villages in our own county, Hancock, occasionally invite him to deliver the annual Commemoration Address, but those of neighboring counties as well, Washington, Waldo and Penobscot. Whenever he received such an invitation, serious deliberations took place in our household, both between him and my mother and among us all, for a great deal was involved in an affirmative decision. The strain upon my father was bound to be considerable, for he could not take lightly the composition of his oration, its many rehearsals and its final delivery, and, since my mother was deeply concerned in all these activities, upon her as well. Moreover, his insistence that his entire family, except for the baby, accompany him



upon these occasions meant a distracting upheaval of our usual uneventful routine. And finally, much as we children welcomed a rare excursion abroad, we were inwardly torn both by nervous dread lest my father should fail to do honor to himself and to us all and by an intense regret over missing the Memorial Day celebrations at home.

At that time, in the eighteen nineties and at the turn of the century, New England villages and small towns, and many outside New England as well, provided they were north of Mason and Dixon's line, observed this sacred holiday after a carefully prescribed manner; and ours was no exception to the rule. In the morning all graves in the village cemetery, which during the preceding week had been mown and clipped by our sexton, were decorated by the families concerned with potted plants and with jars and vases of flowers; and small American flags were set upright by our town authorities on those which marked the resting place of soldiers, whether of the Revolutionary or of the Civil War. At precisely two o'clock in the afternoon a long procession marched from our town hall on the green toward the cemetery one half mile distant above our small, quiet harbor.

Our village band headed the line of march, erect and spruce in gold-laced green uniforms, which upon its original formation had been eagerly provided by local contributions. Its few members played their flutes, cornets, trumpets and drums with marked dignity, martial music being the order before the procession entered the cemetery, when muffled drumbeats superseded it. Directly behind the band rode our one cavalry officer, Capt. Augustus Stevens. He wore a broad-brimmed hat with a faded gold cord and in his free right hand held aloft a flashing sword. He was an imposing figure, who each year sent a chill down my back; and although his horse was hardly of the mettle of those which charged at Gettysburg, he, too, seemed to us magnificent as his hoofs sent up whirls of dust from the country road. Captain Stevens led our soldiers of the Civil War, those survivors of the Grand Army of the Republic, mostly elderly men or of late middle age, solemn in their worn blue uniforms with small, stiff-visored caps. Our two ministers, of the Congregational and Baptist churches, followed in somber black, and behind them marched the speaker of the day (sometimes my father himself) in top hat, Prince Albert and striped trousers, who would deliver his oration once the procession had returned, broken ranks and filed into the town hall. Children completed the line of march: scores of children; boys in tight knee pants and white blouses, girls in summer frocks of gingham or percale, all awe-struck and silent. Each child carried a bouquet of flowers — lilacs and apple blossoms if the spring was early enough, violets and wild cherry if it was slow in coming — to place upon the graves of our honored dead when once the procession with a final roll of drumbeats should halt in the cemetery and the signal should be given us.

To miss all this — the music, the sight of the soldiers with their mounted

commander, the lines of people watching by the roadside, the intoxicating thought that one played a part in a tremendous drama, enacted but once a year — was deprivation indeed. There was also the chance, slender to be sure, but not impossible, that one might be mysteriously chosen to march beside the soldiers and to carry a pail of water with a dipper in case one of them should suddenly become faint or tired. A boy and a girl were selected each year for this stupendous honor and service. I never was numbered among the lucky ones, but I always hoped and dreamed that I might be. Still, as my mother made quite clear to us, if my father were honored by an invitation elsewhere and if he should decide to accept it, we must all do our utmost to uphold him in his decision and without the least show of disappointment.

Communities desiring an outside orator usually proffered their requests around Town Meeting Day, which was then, as now, the first Monday in March. On or about that date in the year 1900, when I was thirteen, my father was invited to give the Memorial Day address in the town of Castine, sixteen miles away. He took less time than usual in returning an affirmative decision, for Castine was a historic town with a most unusual past. Named for a French baron of the seventeenth century, who had built a fort there, it had later known occupation by both Dutch and English and in the War of the Revolution had been held in British possession. It was (and still is) a beautiful town on Penobscot Bay; and it was known far and wide for the superior quality of its citizenry. My father could ill afford not to accept its gracious invitation; and we straightway began to prepare for his appearance there in its First Unitarian Church.

He always mercifully wrote his oration in his dingy law office, located throughout his life above our one substantial grocery store; yet since he was frequently given to muttering portions of it at home or to pacing back and forth through the house or barn, clearly lost in the throes of further composition, my mother was never unaware either of its progress or of those periods of desperate barrenness which always accompany all literary endeavor. Nor were we children unaffected during those three months between Town Meeting and Memorial Day, for, whenever my father began his muttering or his pacing, we, like King Hezekiah in the Old Testament, went “softly” about our various occupations or, if possible, cleared out altogether.

Once the Castine oration was completed and read aloud many times to my mother, more for her approval than for her advice, she became immensely helpful to my father in the matter of gestures. For at that period gestures in any public address were both expected and carefully noted, and to omit them would have been unthinkable. My mother maintained that gestures should be effective, but in no sense ostentatious; and my father, with the awful example of William Jennings Bryan before him,\* entirely agreed with her. She favored a graceful wave of either hand until the arm should be at a right angle to the body, and at especially fervent moments of both hands in unison. She did not object to the

elevation of the right arm to an almost perpendicular position if sentiment and eloquence demanded, or even to the clenching of the two hands before one; but she deplored the pointing of index fingers at the audience, any pounding upon the speaker's desk, and all bodily contortions whatsoever. These invariably sacrificed dignity, she said, and dignity, never divorced of course from sincere feeling, was the essence of a speaker's appeal.

The gestures at last decided upon between them, at least two rehearsals were held before us all, my father by this time having memorized his address. These took place in the kitchen and were truly awesome affairs, during which we children sat, tense, spellbound and worried. My father's final appearance before his family was in the nature of a dress rehearsal, for, because my mother thought he might feel awkward in Castine out of his usual business suit, he donned his Prince Albert, striped trousers and stiff shirt and in this attire solemnly delivered his oration. Needless to say, no suggestions from his children were solicited. We were there solely to admire.

Fortunately I do not have to rely only upon my memory in order to describe my father's appearance in Castine. Some months ago I discovered his address in a bundle of family papers and can now read it precisely as it was delivered with but one paragraph out of place. The paragraph in question came to the Castine audience as a triumphant innovation on my father's part, a bit of extemporaneous composition which established his reputation as one able at an unexpected crisis to rise to incredible heights of eloquence. It was, in point of fact, nothing of the kind.

This excerpt from my father's address had been the subject of much discussion and even of argument between my mother and him. It was a brief tribute to the men in gray, our enemies of forty years before; and my father had written it with charity and care and favored its inclusion. He had, however, been reluctantly persuaded by my mother to omit it, since, as she pointed out, Memorial Day was distinctly a day of commemoration for our men in blue and since the oration was already of generous length. That he had thoroughly memorized this excluded paragraph was merely one of those happy circumstances which one can attribute either to Chance or to Providence.

Our drive to Castine on May thirtieth in our surrey behind our two well-groomed black horses was an anxious one. My brother and my elder sister occupied the front seat with my father; my mother, my younger sister and I sat behind them. My father wore a linen duster over his Prince Albert, and my mother had taken the added precaution of inserting a piece of white druggist's paper between his immaculate linen and the duster in order that he might arrive in perfect condition. In her lap she carried his top hat swathed in a clean napkin. I had the honor of carefully holding his gold-headed cane. The weather was mercifully fine though unseasonably warm.

Although on any other day I should have been blissful over an excellent

dinner in a real hotel and proud beyond words of the attentions of the hotel staff, I was swept by waves of homesickness as two o'clock drew near. There, but sixteen miles away, our own procession was forming; here, as all the Castine children gathered with their flowers, my brother and sisters and I could but watch from the side lines. To see my father take his place behind the Castine clergy was but small comfort. I obtained far more, in fact, from observing that the Castine procession possessed no captain of cavalry, no horse, no flashing sword.

There was some compensation, it is true, in our grave entrance as a family into the crowded church, the polite ushering of us all into a front pew; but there dread quickly overcame distinction. Suppose my father did not acquit himself well? Suppose he fumbled in his delivery, misplaced his gestures or forgot his words? He himself could not lend us security by his dignity or calm, for he was being kept behind the scenes, presumably in the church vestry, until the moment came for his dramatic entrance.

I looked toward my mother at the far end of the pew. She was clearly agitated, for she had unfolded her pale blue fan and was fanning her perspiring face. Folded on her lap was my father's oration, which, although she knew it by heart, she would follow as surreptitiously as possible so that she might leap into the awful breach by prompting him in case of failure.

Our fears proved groundless. My father's entrance was more impressive than any he had yet made, at home or abroad. With his top hat and gray kid gloves carried against his left breast, he proceeded slowly up the aisle and ascended the stairs leading to the platform.

Once in the pulpit, he surveyed his audience, his eyes seemingly missing no one except his nervous family, until they came to rest upon the pews directly opposite our own where Castine's soldiers of the Grand Army sat together. Upon these he now bent his solemn, admiring gaze, for it was to them that he was first to speak. Then his familiar opening words burst forth:

"Gentlemen! Defenders of the Republic! Preservers of the Union! Two score years have well nigh sped since you performed with dauntless heroism your sacred mission upon the hallowed earth of this nation. So swift, indeed, has flowed the ever-rolling stream of Time that he who now addresses you can but dimly recall the martial music of your homecoming."

From prologue to epilogue my father's lofty periods rose and fell, every intonation designed to arouse emotion, every telling gesture perfectly performed, every pause weighted with eloquence. We relaxed. My mother folded her fan. Her hands forgot to turn the pages in her lap. She sat entranced and confident. Was she, too, I thought, wondering how this superb presence in the pulpit could be the same man who milked our cow twice daily, was often fretful over trifles, and occasionally cut himself while shaving and bellowed for hot water?

When, after a spellbinding hour, my father concluded his oration and with his arms outstretched assured the men in blue of eternal glory in that they had

kept our nation one and indivisible, the applause which rose in a mighty swell throughout the church was overwhelming. We alone did not clap our hands, since my mother had thought it unseemly in view of our close connection with the speaker. Then as an added ovation the audience rose, and we, after some hesitation and the exchange of many questioning glances, rose also. Tears were by this time visible on my mother's eyelids, and I saw that she was holding her lower lip firmly between her teeth.

If my father was overcome by this flattering reception of his oration, he did not show it. He stood in the pulpit for some moments, bowing with great dignity, to the front, to the right, to the left. As the applause increased, he walked to the edge of the platform and continued bowing, now bringing his shoulders and chest into dramatic action. When the clapping had at last died away and that moment of silence which always marks the failure to leave one world quickly for another had transfixed the audience, he turned to descend the pulpit stairs and to make his triumphal way down the main aisle.

Then an unexpected thing happened, a thing unprepared for in a day prepared to the least detail. Before my father had reached the stairs, an old man rose from his seat near the front of the church, from the farthest corner beneath a window. That he was a stranger was evident from the curious stares leveled upon him. He stood for an instant in his place and then called out clearly in a high, quavering voice:

"A remarkable oration, young man! But have you no tribute for the boys in gray?"

My father hesitated for but the fraction of a minute, but in that fraction I saw him look toward my mother with both reproof and elation. Then he slowly walked back across the platform until he stood facing the old man before an audience tense with confusion, excitement and indignation. His voice rose in the quiet church:

"In this solemn hour, on this most sacred of days, let us not forget or, indeed, be callous toward those brave men who likewise yielded up their lives, even if for another principle and for another purpose. Only God in His omnipotent wisdom can judge the right and reward the just. Yet heroism in whatever cause is forever glorious, and life sacrificed for that cause forever hallowed."

Only his family in the front pew knew that my father's tribute to the men in gray was not extemporaneous. Yet even we were unprepared for his final act. For when he had descended the stairs, he moved impulsively toward the stranger, took him by the hand, and with him at his side paced slowly down the aisle. The men in blue followed, two by two, and not a few in tears. In the year 1900 the public display of emotion was not so curtailed as it is today, and handkerchiefs were much in evidence throughout the First Unitarian Church of Castine.

We drove home through the spring twilight in silence. My father seemed remote and inaccessible. He had declined to wear his linen duster and sat erect

and august in his top hat and Prince Albert, holding the reins in his left hand and the tasseled whip across them high in his right. The thrushes and whippoorwills sounded plaintively in the distance. And I, sitting beside my mother in the back seat, compared my father not unfavorably with Capt. Augustus Stevens and his flashing sword.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Compare the oratory of 1900 with that of today. Compare the "public display of emotion" then and now; was it sincere?
2. Who was Captain Augustus Stevens?
3. Mention two gestures which Mrs. Chase approved of; one which she didn't like.
4. To whom did Mr. Chase pay tribute at the end of his address? Was this extemporaneous?

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION II

1. Which autobiographical selections make the greatest use of suspense and conflict? which the least? What is the conflict, or how does the author achieve the suspense?
2. Try to sum up the point made by each autobiographical selection in a single sentence. How much of each author's philosophy of life is revealed?
3. Which characters do you remember most clearly? which settings? which episodes or anecdotes? Look back to these passages and try to figure out what made them memorable.
4. Compare the first paragraphs of the selections, and jot down the purpose or purposes each serves — i.e., introduction of narrative problem, setting of scene, statement of main idea, etc.
5. Compare the treatment of material by the different autobiographers. (An autobiographical selection may be a narrative, a personal essay, etc.)
6. Describe and compare the personalities of any two of these authors. What makes you think they were like that? Which of all these writers did you like the best? the least?

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Think of some difficulties you have had in learning something new (how to drive a car, to dance, to swim, to be the life of the party, or, as in Mark Twain, to live through basic training). Write up some interesting experiences with humorous incident and dialogue.
2. Try a reflective essay, in Thoreau's manner, on some experience that moved you deeply and made you think about life (the marriage of a favorite sister, a brother's going into the army, a narrow escape from death, a religious experience, a disillusionment).
3. Parallel Papashvily, Thurber, or Skinner with the story of your experiences in a new town, a new school, a new camp. Bring out the kindness or unkindness of the strangers among whom you were thrown, and show how the experience affected your character.
4. Reminisce, à la Strout White or Mary Ellen Chase, about a machine, game, or custom of your childhood. Try to explain your subject with as much vivid detail as White gives about the Model T, and put across the pleasures it brought, which people miss today.

## SECTION

# III

## EXPLANATION

Most articles that are published these days either present interesting facts explaining some noncontroversial matter, like the atom, or else use facts to argue a case -- for example, for or against big-time football. The first type is the explanatory article; the second is an opinion piece.

This section contains examples of the explanatory article. Although this kind is the easier of the two to write, it still has a more definite structure than autobiography -- and a very useful function. It teaches us something new: how to play a game, how a high tension wire functions, what natural forces control the weather . . . and it does this, if skillfully written, in an entertaining fashion.

If you have ever directed a passing motorist to that hotel you know perfectly well on "what-you-call-it" street, up the hill from the "blank" building -- the one with the "thingamajig" on top -- you know already the explanatory writer's chief problem: *how to make his piece clear*. The selections following contain several devices which you can borrow to solve this problem in your explanatory themes.

Let's look first at the selection from Walton's *Compleat Angler*. This starts with an interesting snatch of dialogue in which Venator demands that Piscator fulfill his promise to "give me direction . . . how I shall fish for a Trout." And Piscator, our veteran fisherman, replies, "I will take this very convenient opportunity to do it. The Trout is usually caught with a worm, or a Minnow . . . or with a Fly . . . concerning which three, I will give you some observations and directions." In other words, Walton begins his simple piece of explanation with *a statement of his subject and the organization to be followed* (the three kinds of bait to be discussed). You can do the same in your theme; such a beginning orients the reader at once -- he will understand the earlier steps better for knowing what is to come after.

Now that you have begun with this clear statement of subject and organization, you are likely to find *a numbered series of steps* useful. At least, for any

process, such as changing a tire or assembling a radio, this is the best way to make your directions clear. In Section I, Adler's "How to Mark a Book" contains such a list, the seven chief ways of marking a book ("1. Underlining; 2. Vertical lines at the margin; 3. Star, asterisk, or other doo-dad at the margin," etc.). Notice that in this list the items are in parallel form — all nouns. If you begin your list with, say, an imperative ("1. Drive off the road when you hear the tire go flat"), then make the rest of your numbered directions imperatives, also. It's neater, and easier for the reader to follow.

But you are more familiar with your subject than your reader is. How can you be sure he fully grasps each individual step? *Comparisons of steps in your process or theory with everyday objects or actions* will help tremendously. Just how is the blubber being torn off the whale by all that complicated windlass apparatus in "Cutting In?" Melville explains: "Now as the blubber envelopes the whale precisely as the rind does an orange, so is it stripped off from the body precisely as an orange is sometimes stripped by spiralizing it." What is the simple, essential motion in the apparently complicated tennis serve? "To serve well, you must learn to throw well," Tilden elucidates. "Actually, a service is nothing more than throwing the flat strings of the racquet head against the ball at a point in the air as high as you can comfortably reach. Watch any good baseball player throw a ball. . . ."

Finally, don't forget to *give your subject as much interest as possible*. A few illustrative anecdotes may be introduced in the body of the theme, if they do not get in the way of the explanation. But the beginning and end are the best places for more general, eye-catching material: Walton's introductory dialogue, Carson's anecdote about the fear that the building of the Panama Canal would displace the Gulf Stream, Bronowski's conclusion about the possible uses of the atom and the future of mankind. You can hold the reader's interest in the body of your theme by the very clarity of your explanation, the aptness of your comparisons, the cleverness of your sentences (cf. Langeweische's "Everybody wants electricity at the same time. The 'load' starts building up at 6 a.m. and goes to a peak by 11, then eases for lunch. . . . A power plant must be steered, so to speak, up and down this daily curve.").

Glancing now, more closely, at the selections in this section, we discover that those by Walton, Franklin, Tilden, and Melville are examples of simple exposition. Walton's is chiefly about equipment. The *Compleat Angler* is three hundred years old, but its sentences are perfectly clear and also sparkling with the beauty of an ancient woodcut, as in the description of the artificial Minnow: "The mould or body of the Minnow was cloth, and wrought upon, or over it, thus, with a needle; the back of it with very sad French green silk, and paler green silk towards the belly, shadowed as perfectly as you can imagine . . . all of it so curiously wrought, and so exactly dissembled, that it would beguile any sharp-sighted Trout in a swift stream." Walton's purpose, he says, is to "direct



you in this as plainly as I can, that you may not mistake," an excellent definition of the purpose of any explanatory article.

Franklin's letter on how to construct a lightning rod is written in the same clear, classical English as Walton's treatise. The directions are *detailed* and *complete*, with exact figures and dimensions given throughout, e.g., "Prepare a steel rod *five or six feet long, half an inch thick* at its biggest end, and tapering to a sharp point. . . . Let the big end of the rod have a strong eye or ring of *half an inch* diameter. . . . Let the pointed end be upwards, and rise *three or four feet* above the chimney. . . ." etc. His beginning is direct ("I now send you what at present appears to me to be the shortest and simplest method of securing buildings, &c., from the mischiefs of lightning.").

Tilden's account of the serve in tennis is distinguished by its excellent organization: 1. the three types of service; 2. the serve motion described in general; 3. faults to be avoided; 4. detailed instructions for each of the three serves. You should try to be as careful as Franklin in giving essential dimensions, distances, time intervals, etc., for any process you describe; and as logical and comprehensive as Tilden in organizing your subject, and in anticipating and clearly warning against errors your readers might make when following your instructions.

Herman Melville succeeds better than any other writer in making you *see* the process he is describing. How does he do it? Study the following passage for an answer: "Then holding the lance full before his waistband's middle, he levels it at the whale; when, covering him with it, he steadily depresses the butt-end in his hand, thereby elevating the point till the weapon stands fairly balanced upon his palm, fifteen feet in the air. He minds you somewhat of a juggler, balancing a long staff on his chin. Next moment with a rapid, nameless impulse, in a superb lofty arch the bright steel spans the foaming distance, and quivers in the life spot of the whale. Instead of sparkling water, he now spouts red blood." By his splendid visualization of the scene, by the apt comparison with the juggler's staff, in short, by imaginative power, Melville makes you, too, see how pitchpoling is done. He is the poet among our explanatory writers; but you can learn something from those brilliant comparisons.

Langewiesche, Carson, and Bronowski are the scientists; with them we come to "advanced explanation."

Of the three, Langewiesche is least technical — most popular — in his exposition. From him you can derive numerous hints on how to make your explanatory themes *interesting*, e.g., (1) by the use of an informal style ("The way it is, there is no fuss, noise, smell or motion; just six wires swooping from mast to mast, full of mysterious stuff.") with plenty of "personal" words ("I," "you," etc.) and "personal" sentences (especially questions — "What *is* high tension?" "How does a power plant make electricity?"); (2) by homely but vivid comparisons, comprehensible to all readers from their everyday experience ("Those

steel towers, running through the scenery like men with stacks of pottery,' "Electricity in a wire is like water in a pipe . . . Current, measured in amperes, is the water flow — so many gallons per minute.").

In contrast to Langewiesche is Rachel Carson's sober, logically constructed prose. She uses very few comparisons, indeed quotes her most effective one from another authority, and her sentences, though clear, are longish. Yet these sentences, connected in paragraphs each beginning with a clear topic sentence and each developed in one of the standard ways recommended by rhetoricians (e.g., paragraph 2, by examples; paragraph 3, by comparison and contrast; paragraph 4, by cause and effect) convey meaning at least as successfully as Langewiesche's livelier ones. So do not overlook the *well-developed paragraph with topic sentence*, especially if you are explaining something abstract like a scientific theory.

Finally, Bronowski, in "ABC of the Atom," uses that old standby of teachers, question and answer. From the comparatively easy first questions ("What Is an Atom?" "Where Are Atoms Found?") the reader is led along to the highly technical "What Is Fission?" and "What Is Fusion?", then let down gently at the end with the more general "Can Atomic Energy Benefit Man?" The real divisions of the article seem to be the definition of the atom, explanation of atomic structure, and explanation of atomic energy through fission and fusion. The questions somewhat disguise these divisions, but make for easier reading. You could use this method in a theme about safe driving, or the best way to enjoy a football game — wherever you wish to impress on your readers a few clear-cut notions, rather than a complete and coherent theory. Notice, though, that Bronowski does have a separate beginning and ending, not headed by questions.

The ability to explain, lucidly and interestingly, is a gift. In addition to the writers represented here, such literary greats as Plato and Swift possessed it preeminently. The *Reader's Digest* includes many examples of this type of article, slanted at a popular audience. If you can master the technique of the explanatory article, your ability will stand you in good stead both during and after college, and may prove more useful than any other writing skill you could acquire.

*"Study to be quiet," one of Izaak Walton's favorite mottoes, suggests his own gentle character. He was in business as an ironmonger until the English Civil War led him to retire, but fishing and friends -- friends like John Donne and Ben Jonson -- were probably his chief interests. His Compleat Angler, first published in 1653, went through five editions before the end of the century and has been reprinted many times since. A retired cook helped him with the parts on fly fishing; on the use of the live worm, grasshopper, and frog, Walton was an expert. He left much of his property to the poor, dying shortly after making his will on his ninetyeth birthday.*

PISCATOR. Good-morrow, good hostess, I see my Brother Peter is still in bed. Come, give my Scholar and me a morning drink, and a bit of meat to breakfast: and be sure to get a dish of meat or two against supper, for we shall come home as hungry as hawks. Come, Scholar, let's be going.

VENATOR. Well now, good Master, as we walk towards the river, give me direction, according to your promise, how I shall fish for a Trout.

PISCATOR. My honest Scholar, I will take this very convenient opportunity to do it.

The Trout is usually caught with a worm, or a Minnow, which some call a Penk, or with a Fly, viz. either a natural or an artificial Fly: concerning which three, I will give you some observations and directions.

And, first, for worms. Of these there be very many sorts: some breed only in the earth, as the Earth-worm; others of, or amongst plants, as the Dug-worm; and others breed either out of excrements, or in the bodies of living creatures, as in the horns of sheep or deer; or some of dead flesh, as the maggot or gentle, and others.

Now these be most of them particularly good for particular fishes. But for the Trout, the Dew-worm, which some also call the Lob-worm, and the Brandling, are the chief; and especially the first for a great Trout, and the latter for a less. There be also of Lob-worms, some called Squirrel-tails, a worm that has a red head, a streak down the back, and a broad tail, which are noted to be the best, because they are the toughest and most lively, and live longest in the water; for you are to know that a dead worm is but a dead bait, and like to catch nothing, compared to a lively, quick, stirring worm. And for a Brandling, he is usually found in an old dung-hill, or some very rotten place near to it, but most usually in cow-dung, or hog's-dung, rather than horse-dung, which is somewhat too hot and dry for that worm. But the best of them are to be found in the bark of

the tanners, which they cast up in heaps after they have used it about their leather.

There are also divers other kinds of worms, which, for colour and shape, alter even as the ground out of which they are got; as the Marsh-worm, the Tag-tail, the Flag-worm, the Dock-worm, the Oak-worm, the Gilt-tail, the Twachel or Lob-worm, which of all others is the most excellent bait for a Salmon, and too many to name, even as many sorts as some think there be of several herbs or shrubs, or of several kinds of birds in the air: of which I shall say no more, but tell you, that what worms soever you fish with, are the better for being well scoured, that is, long kept before they be used: and in case you have not been so provident, then the way to cleanse and scour them quickly, is, to put them all night in water, if they be Lob-worms, and then put them into your bag with fennel. But you must not put your Brandlings above an hour in water, and then put them into fennel, for sudden use: but if you have time, and purpose to keep them long, then they be best preserved in an earthen pot, with good store of moss, which is to be fresh every three or four days in summer, and every week or eight days in winter; or, at least, the moss taken from them, and clean washed, and wrung betwixt your hands till it be dry, and then put it to them again. And when your worms, especially the Brandling, begins to be sick and lose of his bigness, then you may recover him, by putting a little milk or cream, about a spoonful in a day, into them, by drops on the moss; and if there be added to the cream an egg beaten and boiled in it, then it will both fatten and preserve them long. And note, that when the knot, which is near to the middle of the Brandling, begins to swell, then he is sick; and, if he be not well looked to, is near dying. And for moss, you are to note, that there be divers kinds of it, which I could name to you, but I will only tell you that that which is likest a buck's-horn is the best, except it be soft white moss, which grows on some heaths, and is hard to be found. And note, that in a very dry time, when you are put to an extremity for worms, walnut-tree leaves squeezed into water, or salt and water, to make it bitter or salt, and then that water poured on the ground where you shall see worms are used to rise in the night, will make them to appear above ground presently. And you may take notice, some say that camphire put into your bag with your moss and worms gives them a strong and so tempting a smell, that the fish fare the worse and you the better for it.

And now, I shall shew you how to bait your hook with a worm so as shall prevent you from much trouble, and the loss of many a hook, too, when you fish for a Trout with a running line; that is to say, when you fish for him by hand at the ground. I will direct you in this as plainly as I can, that you may not mistake.

Suppose it be a big Lob-worm: put your hook into him somewhat above the middle, and out again a little below the middle: having so done, draw your worm above the arming of your hook; but note, that, at the entering of your

hook, it must not be at the head-end of the worm, but at the tail-end of him, that the point of your hook may come out toward the head-end; and, having drawn him above the arming of your hook, then put the point of your hook again into the very head of your worm, till it come near to the place where the point of the hook first came out, and then draw back that part of the worm that was above the shank or arming of your hook, and so fish with it. And if you mean to fish with two worms, then put the second on before you turn back the hook's-head of the first worm. You cannot lose above two or three worms before you attain to what I direct you; and having attained it, you will find it very useful, and thank me for it: for you will run on the ground without tangling.

Now for the Minnow or Penk: he is not easily found and caught till March, or in April, for then he appears first in the river; nature having taught him to shelter and hide himself, in the winter, in ditches that be near to the river; and there both to hide, and keep himself warm, in the mud, or in the weeds, which rot not so soon as in a running river, in which place if he were in winter, the distempered floods that are usually in that season would suffer him to take no rest, but carry him headlong to mills and weirs, to his confusion. And of these Minnows: first, you are to know, that the biggest size is not the best; and next, that the middle size and the whitest are the best; and then you are to know, that your Minnow must be so put on your hook, that it must turn round when 'tis drawn against the stream; and, that it may turn nimbly, you must put it on a big-sized hook, as I shall now direct you, which is thus: Put your hook in at his mouth, and out at his gill; then, having drawn your hook two or three inches beyond or through his gill, put it again into his mouth, and the point and beard out at his tail; and then tie the hook and his tail about, very neatly, with a white thread, which will make it the apter to turn quick in the water; that done, pull back that part of your line which was slack when you did put your hook into the Minnow the second time; I say, pull that part of your line back, so that it shall fasten the head, so that the body of the Minnow shall be almost straight on your hook: this done, try how it will turn, by drawing it across the water or against the stream; and if it do not turn nimbly, then turn the tail a little to the right or left hand, and try again, till it turn quick; for if not, you are in danger to catch nothing: for know, that it is impossible that it should turn too quick. And you are yet to know, that in case you want a Minnow, then a small Loach, or a Sticklebag, or any other small fish that will turn quick, will serve as well. And you are yet to know that you may salt them, and by that means keep them ready and fit for use three or four days, or longer; and that, of salt, bay-salt is the best.

And here let me tell you, what many old Anglers know right well, that at some times, and in some waters, a Minnow is not to be got; and therefore, let me tell you, I have, which I will shew to you, an artificial Minnow, that will catch a Trout as well as an artificial fly: and it was made by a handsome woman

that had a fine hand, and a live Minnow lying by her: the mould or body of the Minnow was cloth, and wrought upon, or over it, thus, with a needle; the back of it with very sad French green silk, and paler green silk towards the belly, shadowed as perfectly as you can imagine, just as you see a Minnow: the belly was wrought also with a needle, and it was, a part of it, white silk; and another part of it with silver thread: the tail and fins were of a quill, which was shaven thin: the eyes were of two little black beads: and the head was so shadowed, and all of it so curiously wrought, and so exactly dissembled, that it would beguile any sharp-sighted Trout in a swift stream. And this Minnow I will now shew you; look, here it is, and, if you like it, lend it you, to have two or three made by it; for they be easily carried about an Angler, and be of excellent use: for note, that a large Trout will come as fiercely at a Minnow as the highest-mettled hawk doth seize on a partridge, or a greyhound on a hare. I have been told that one hundred and sixty Minnows have been found in a Trout's belly: either the Trout had devoured so many, or the miller that gave it a friend of mine had forced them down his throat after he had taken him.

Now for Flies; which is the third bait wherewith Trouts are usually taken. You are to know, that there are so many sorts of flies as there be of fruits: I will name you but some of them; as the Dun-fly, the Stone-fly, the Red-fly, the Moor-fly, the Tawny-fly, the Shell-fly, the Cloudy or Blackish-fly, the Flag-fly, the Vine-fly; there be of flies, Caterpillars, and Canker-flies, and Bear-flies; and indeed too many either for me to name, or for you to remember. And their breeding is so various and wonderful, that I might easily amaze myself, and tire you in a relation of them.

And yet, I will exercise your promised patience by saying a little of the Caterpillar, or the Palmer-fly or worm; that by them you may guess what a work it were, in a discourse, but to run over those very many flies, worms, and little living creatures, with which the sun and summer adorn and beautify the river-banks and meadows, both for the recreation and contemplation of us Anglers; pleasures which, I think, I myself enjoy more than any other man that is not of my profession.

Pliny holds an opinion, that many have their birth or being, from a dew that in the spring falls upon the leaves of trees; and that some kinds of them are from a dew left upon herbs or flowers; and others from a dew left upon coleworts or cabbages; all which kinds of dews being thickened and condensed, are by the sun's generative heat, most of them, hatched, and in three days made living creatures: and these of several shapes and colours; some being hard and tough, some smooth and soft; some are horned in their head, some in their tail, some have none; some have hair, some none; some have sixteen feet, some less, and some have none; but, as our Topsel hath with great diligence observed, those which have none, move upon the earth, or upon broad leaves, their motion being not unlike to the waves of the sea. Some of them he also observes to be bred

of the eggs of other caterpillars, and that those in their time turn to be butterflies; and again, that their eggs turn the following year to be caterpillars. And some affirm, that every plant has its particular fly or caterpillar, which it breeds and feeds. I have seen, and may therefore affirm it, a green caterpillar, or worm, as big as a small peascod, which had fourteen legs, eight on the belly, four under the neck, and two near the tail. It was found on a hedge of privet; and was taken thence, and put into a large box, and a little branch or two of privet put to it, on which I saw it feed as sharply as a dog gnaws a bone: it lived thus, five or six days, and thrived, and changed the colour two or three times, but by some neglect in the keeper of it, it then died, and did not turn to a fly: but if it had lived, it had doubtless turned to one of those flies that some call Flies of prey, which those that walk by the rivers may, in summer, see fasten on smaller flies, and, I think, make them their food. And 'tis observable, that as there be these Flies of prey, which be very large; so there be others, very little, created, I think, only to feed them, and breed out of I know not what; whose life, they say, nature intended not to exceed an hour; and yet that life is thus made shorter by other flies, or accident.

'Tis endless to tell you what the curious searchers into nature's productions have observed of these worms and flies: but yet I shall tell you what Aldrovandus, our Topsel, and others, say of the Palmer-worm, or Caterpillar: that whereas others content themselves to feed on particular herbs or leaves (for most think, those very leaves that gave them life and shape, give them a particular feeding and nourishment, and that upon them they usually abide), yet he observes, that this is called a Pilgrim, or Palmer-worm, for his very wandering life, and various food; not contenting himself as others do, with any one certain place for his abode, nor any certain kind of herb or flower for his feeding, but will boldly and disorderly wander up and down, and not endure to be kept to a diet, or fixt to a particular place.

Nay, the very colours of Caterpillars are, as one has observed, very elegant and beautiful. I shall, for a taste of the rest, describe one of them; which I will, some time the next month, shew you feeding on a willow tree; and you shall find him punctually to answer this very description: his lips and mouth somewhat yellow; his eyes black as jet; his forehead purple; his feet and hinder parts green; his tail two-forked and black; the whole body stained with a kind of red spots, which run along the neck and shoulder-blade, not unlike the form of St. Andrew's cross, or the letter X, made thus crosswise, and a white line drawn down his back to his tail; all which add much beauty to his whole body. And it is to me observable, that at a fixed age this Caterpillar gives over to eat, and towards winter comes to be covered over with a strange shell or crust, called an Aurelia; and so lives a kind of dead life, without eating, all the winter. And as others of several kinds turn to be several kinds of flies and vermin, the Spring following, so this caterpillar then turns to be a painted butterfly.

Come, come, my Scholar, you see the river stops our morning walk; and I will also here stop my discourse. . . .

#### QUESTIONS

1. What do the names Piscator and Venator mean?
2. Why does Piscator call Venator "my Scholar"?
3. What three kinds of bait were used in Walton's day to catch trout? What kinds are used today?
4. List some of Walton's hints on keeping worms in good condition.
5. What was Pliny's theory concerning the origin of the multitude of "little living creatures" so useful to anglers?

William T. Tilden

## How to Play Better Tennis

*"Big Bill" Tilden, voted the greatest tennis player of the last fifty years, hit his first tennis ball at the age of six — through a neighbor's window. From that auspicious beginning, he went on to win eleven national championships and three Wimbledon championships, between 1920 and 1930, and to be recognized as World Champion for eight years. Before his death in 1953 he also achieved a reputation, through numerous articles and books, as a master of tennis theory, tactics, and technique.*

### *The Service*

There are three main types of service in general use, and from them come all the other variations that are of any value. These are:

- A. *The Slice.* This is the most used of any type because it is suited to all sizes of players, and is equally easy for men and women.
- B. *The Flat or Cannonball.* This requires a tall man to control with any speed, and is not of much value to short men or to women.
- C. *The American Twist, or "Kick."* Here is a service that any size man or woman can use, but the amount of physical effort involved for the result gained makes it not a sensible service for most women.



Before I go into actual stroke production of the three services, I must impress on the pupil several generalities about all types of service. Power and control in service come from the free use of the racquet head, and can never be gained by the wild gyrations and acrobatic writhings in which you see so many players indulge. All of the great services that I have ever seen have been hit with ease, simplicity, apparently little body movement, and no violent contortion. I consider the services of Ellsworth Vines, Lester Stoesen, Donald Budge, Gottfried von Cramm, and Jack Kramer outstanding examples of service, yet the impression of ease of delivery is found with them all. Notice the ease of Bobby Riggs' service in marked contrast to the labored style of Frank Parker. Anyone who has played them both can tell you how much more difficult Riggs' delivery is than Parker's. The secret of the power and control of all these stars lies in the way in which they control their body weight on firmly planted feet, and their unhampered use of the racquet with a free arm swing that carries smoothly through its entire arc, directly at their opponent's court.

To serve well, you must learn to throw well. That is one reason why so few women have really good services. A woman's arm is so set at the shoulder that it will not throw freely. Actually, a service is nothing more than throwing the flat strings of the racquet head against the ball at a point in the air as high as you can comfortably reach. Watch any good baseball player throw a ball and you will see little body movement, no violent contortions, but lots of free arm motion. Just so should a tennis player, serving, impress the watcher. If I find a pupil having trouble learning a service swing, I hand over an old "beat-up" racquet frame and make the pupil stand on the backline of the court. Then, from a point as high over his head as he can reach, I have him actually throw the racquet into or over the net in the direction of his opponent's service court. It's amazing how quickly the swing develops, even if it is a little tough on the "beat-up" racquet frame.

Peculiarly enough, the toss gets most players into trouble in learning to serve. The swing and toss must be synchronized so they work together and the ball and racquet head arrive at the correct spot in the air simultaneously. It usually makes the beginner feel a little as if he were trying to pat his head with his right hand and rub his stomach with his left at the same time. Instinctively the pupil wants to toss the ball high in the air and then hit at it. This is the wrong approach. *It is wrong to hit at your toss — you should always toss at your swing.* By this I mean you should start your swing and then, as your racquet is coming up, toss the ball to the spot where the racquet will hit it easiest above your head.

The method of tossing high in the air and then hitting the ball, as it's falling, has several disadvantages. Even if we admit that you may be able to time your swing, which is most difficult even for an expert, the method is poor:

1. It destroys the co-ordinated rhythm of arms and swing of racquet so necessary for control.

2. It is very tempting to look away from the ball when it is in the air so long. The instinctive desire is to glance at the opponent's court to see where you are going to hit the ball.
3. The wind may blow the ball off line, or the toss itself may lack direction, both of which are absolutely fatal to this type service.

Its only advantage lies in the time it allows to take a tremendous swing, but such a swing is not needed if you control your racquet head.

By using the proper method, starting the swing and then tossing to the racquet:

1. You gain surprise, since the ball is in the air so short a time that your opponent can't anticipate just when it will be hit.
2. You gain control, because the toss has less time to deflect and a shorter distance to go until hit.
3. You attain perfect rhythm, since the toss arm and the racquet arm go up together and keep the body balanced and ready to hit as hard or as easily as wished.

There are several common errors of service that I want to discuss before the stroke itself. We all know the fellow who winds up and whales the stuffing out of his first service, putting it in about once out of every thousand times, and then follows with an absolute lollypop that just pleads to be murdered. This man is all wet. Neither serve is worth the powder and shot to blow it up, and both should be forgotten.

Both first and second serves should be hit with the same general style of delivery and pace. The first should be hit as hard as you can control, well enough to put about two out of five in the court. The second should be hit as hard as you know will surely put it in. There is no excuse for serving double faults. It is the unforgivable tennis crime. Any player should be able to learn to hit a service so he can put at least 85 per cent of his services in play, and if he does, he will eliminate double faults, or reduce them to one or two a match.

There is another player who must be called to your attention as an eyesore on the tennis court. That is the windmill contortionist. How often have you seen him? He tosses the ball about fifteen feet in the air with mighty flailings of the racquet, one foot twists around his neck, his back bends, and then, as the ball falls to the level of his nose, he gently pushes it across the net. All his tremendous physical gyrations have been wasted. No part of his weight has gone into his serve.

Do not reach too high to serve, since by doing so you injure the rhythm of your swing and probably pull out your shirttail, but above all, do not let the ball fall so low that all you can do is push it over. Take the happy medium. Service should be hit at a point as high as you can *comfortably* reach. It should be hit with a full arm swing but without violent physical effort or unnecessary racquet waving. Keep your backswing simple and free, and without affectation.

The position, both as regards the place to stand behind the baseline and the actual stance of the feet, is the same for all three services. Personally, I advocate serving from a position about four feet to one side of the middle of the court, which will allow you to hit practically straight down the center line of the service court, and also give you plenty of chance to play the angle if desired. Place the feet with the left toe making about a 45-degree angle to the backline, the right one comfortably behind it, and the weight about evenly divided. Thereafter, until the ball is actually hit, do not move the left foot at all, and if the right one moves at all, just lift it, but do not swing it forward (except as noted in the American Twist explanation given below). One hears much about the Footfault Rule, and the prevalence of footfaulting among modern players. There is no need to footfault and it is usually the result of carelessness.

Footfaults most common are:

1. Stepping on the backline of the court.
2. Swinging a foot across the line before the ball is struck.
3. Jumping in the air so both feet leave the ground, even if behind the line.
4. Walking up to the line and serving without coming to a complete stop before commencing to serve.

To serve legally, stop and stand about three inches behind the backline and within the side and middle lines (if continued). Then keep *one* foot on the ground and *both* behind the line until the ball is hit. Once the ball is hit by the racquet, you can do anything with your feet. When you are serving, do not forget the courtesy due your opponent. Be sure he is ready to receive before you serve. The rules provide that he need not play your service unless he is ready, but often a player will hesitate to say "Not ready" and will miss a shot, because he is not quite set. The walking service or the hurried first ball is the usual offense. The easy and gracious way to stop these faults is, when you have come to your position and are ready to serve, to stop and take a look at your opponent to see if he is set. He will appreciate it.

Now for the actual mechanics of the three services. . . .

*A. The Slice Service.* Having taken the position near the center of the baseline indicated previously, glance at your opponent's court to get your final direction, then look at the ball in your left hand. Let the racquet swing slowly back to the right of the body and then up to the right of the head and above it. Much of your weight has now gone back on your right foot. As the racquet starts up, start the left hand, holding the ball, up with it, and from a point about shoulder-high toss the ball to a point as high as the racquet will comfortably reach, slightly to the right of the head and about eight inches forward, toward the net. As your weight flows forward onto your left foot, throw the flat face of the racquet against the ball, meeting it on the upper right surface, and keep your eye fixed on the ball as you hit it. Do not look down at your opponent's court until the ball is hit. Having hit the ball, make the racquet head keep travel-

ing directly at your opponent's service court. The racquet head carries directly through to the very end of the swing, ending below the waist on the left of the body. This will impart a spin, like a pitcher's out-drop curve, that will cause the ball to curve and bounce to your left (your opponent's right). Do not feel your job is done when the ball is struck, and let your arm sag and your swing collapse. Rather feel that the racquet head is going after the ball into your opponent's court.

*B. The Cannonball or Flat Serve.* This is hit identically as described for the slice except that the ball is tossed directly over the head, and the racquet head meets the ball on the upper back surface, and hits directly through it. The so-called Cannonball is really nothing but a slice service with no slice.

*C. The American Twist.* Here the stance is the same, but the backswing carries the racquet head behind the back, which is bent. The ball is tossed to the left of the head and on a line parallel with it as regards the net. Keep the eye fixed on it. The racquet head comes from below, meets the ball on the lower left surface, hits up and over it with a distinct wrist "kick," and ends on the right of the body. In order to keep one's balance, the right leg comes up just about at the time the ball is met, and is extended in front of the body, following the line of the racquet, during the hitting-up-and-over part of the swing. The service curves from your right to left in the air but reverses on the bounce and goes from left to right or to your opponent's backhand. This service should be the last to be learned, and it can be mastered only by hard practice. It is slow and high, and the bound is high. It is a good second service, and is also excellent in doubles to allow the server to follow in to the net.

One often hears much of the various trick services, like the Reverse, the Underhand Cut, etc. Personally I do not consider them of any real value, only as amusements. They do not confuse any player who knows his business, and I strongly urge young players to let them severely alone.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What are the three main types of service? Which type is most used?
2. How high should the ball be thrown when you are preparing to serve?
3. What is a "footfault"? What is a "double fault"?
4. Why do women find the serve more difficult than men?

*Herman Melville's novel Moby Dick (1851), almost completely ignored for seventy years after it was published, is now considered "one of the strangest and most wonderful books in the world . . . the greatest book of the sea ever written." It is based on Melville's own experiences aboard the whaler Acushnet. Harpooning a whale from a small boat, he remarked, "is quite as terrible as going into battle, to a raw recruit." After his return from voyaging, Melville lived most of the rest of his life quietly in New York City. His romantic adventure stories Typee (1846), Omoo (1847), and White Jacket (1850) gained him more fame in the nineteenth century than the epic Moby Dick.*

## LXVII. CUTTING IN

It was a Saturday night, and such a Sabbath as followed! Ex officio professors of Sabbath breaking are all whalemén. The ivory Pequod was turned into what seemed a shamble; every sailor a butcher. You would have thought we were offering up ten thousand red oxen to the sea gods.

In the first place, the enormous cutting tackles, among other ponderous things comprising a cluster of blocks generally painted green, and which no single man can possibly lift -- this vast bunch of grapes was swayed up to the main-top and firmly lashed to the lower mast-head, the strongest point anywhere above a ship's deck. The end of the hawser-like rope winding through these intricacies, was then conducted to the windlass, and the huge lower block of the tackles was swung over the whale; to this block the great blubber hook, weighing some one hundred pounds, was attached. And now suspended in stages over the side, Starbuck and Stubb, the mates, armed with their long spades, began cutting a hole in the body for the insertion of the hook just above the nearest of the two side-lins. This done, a broad, semicircular line is cut round the hole, the hook is inserted, and the main body of the crew striking up a wild chorus, now commence heaving in one dense crowd at the windlass. When instantly, the entire ship careens over on her side; every bolt in her starts like the nailheads of an old house in frosty weather; she trembles, quivers, and nods her frightened mast-heads to the sky. More and more she leans over to the whale, while every gasping heave of the windlass is answered by a helping heave from the billows; till at last, a swift, startling snap is heard; with a great swash the ship rolls upwards and backwards from the whale, and the triumphant tackle rises into sight dragging after it the disengaged semicircular end of the first strip of blubber. Now as the blubber envelopes the whale precisely as the rind does an orange, so is it stripped off from the body precisely as an orange is sometimes stripped by spiralizing it. For the strain constantly kept up by the windlass continually

keeps the whale rolling over and over in the water, and as the blubber in one strip uniformly peels off along the line called the "scarf," simultaneously cut by the spades of Starbuck and Stubb, the mates; and just as fast as it is thus peeled off, and indeed by that very act itself, it is all the time being hoisted higher and higher aloft till its upper end grazes the main-top; the men at the windlass then cease heaving, and for a moment or two the prodigious blood-dripping mass sways to and fro as if let down from the sky, and every one present must take good heed to dodge it when it swings, else it may box his ears and pitch him headlong overboard.

One of the attending harpooners now advances with a long, keen weapon called a boarding-sword, and watching his chance he dexterously slices out a considerable hole in the lower part of the swaying mass. Into this hole, the end of the second alternating great tackle is then hooked so as to retain a hold upon the blubber, in order to prepare for what follows. Whereupon, this accomplished swordsman, warning all hands to stand off, once more makes a scientific dash at the mass, and with a few sidelong, desperate, lunging slicings, severs it completely in twain; so that while the short lower part is still fast, the long upper strip, called a blanket-piece, swings clear, and is all ready for lowering. The heavers forward now resume their song, and while the one tackle is peeling and hoisting a second strip from the whale, the other is slowly slackened away, and down goes the first strip through the main hatchway right beneath, into an unfurnished parlor called the blubber-room. Into this twilight apartment sundry nimble hands keep coiling away the long blanket-piece as if it were a great live mass of plaited serpents. And thus the work proceeds; the two tackles hoisting and lowering simultaneously; both whale and windlass heaving, the heavers singing, the blubber-room gentlemen coiling, the mates scarfing, the ship straining, and all hands swearing occasionally, by way of assuaging the general friction.

#### LXXXIV. PITCHPOLING

To make them run easily and swiftly, the axles of carriages are anointed; and for much the same purpose, some whalers perform an analogous operation upon their boat; they grease the bottom. Nor is it to be doubted that as such a procedure can do no harm, it may possibly be of no contemptible advantage; considering that oil and water are hostile; that oil is a sliding thing, and that the object in view is to make the boat slide bravely. Queequeg believed strongly in anointing his boat, and one morning not long after the German ship *Jungfrau* disappeared, took more than customary pains in that occupation; crawling under its bottom, where it hung over the side, and rubbing in the unctuousness as though diligently seeking to insure a crop of hair from the craft's bald keel. He seemed to be working in obedience to some particular presentiment. Nor did it remain unwarranted by the event.

Towards noon whales were raised; but so soon as the ship sailed down to them, they turned and fled with swift precipitancy; a disordered flight, as of Cleopatra's barges from Actium.

Nevertheless, the boats pursued, and Stubb's was foremost. By great exertion, Tashtego at last succeeded in planting one iron; but the stricken whale, without at all sounding, still continued his horizontal flight, with added fleetness. Such unintermitted strainings upon the planted iron must sooner or later inevitably extract it. It became imperative to lance the flying whale, or be content to lose him. But to haul the boat up to his flank was impossible, he swam so fast and furious. What then remained?

Of all the wondrous devices and dexterities, the sleights of hand and countless subtleties, to which the veteran whaleman is so often forced, none exceed that fine manœuvre with the lance called *pitchpoling*. Small sword, or broad sword, in all its exercises boasts nothing like it. It is indispensable only with an inveterate running whale; its grand fact and feature is the wonderful distance to which the long lance is accurately darted from a violently rocking, jerking boat, under extreme headway. Steel and wood included, the entire spear is some ten or twelve feet in length; the staff is much slighter than that of the harpoon, and also of a lighter material — pine. It is furnished with a small rope called a *warp*, of considerable length, by which it can be hauled back to the hand after darting.

But before going further, it is important to mention here, that though the harpoon may be pitchpoled in the same way with the lance, yet it is seldom done; and when done, is still less frequently successful, on account of the greater weight and inferior length of the harpoon as compared with the lance, which in effect become serious drawbacks. As a general thing, therefore, you must first get fast to a whale, before any pitchpoling comes into play.

Look now at Stubb; a man who from his humorous, deliberate coolness and equanimity in the direst emergencies, was specially qualified to excel in pitchpoling. Look at him; he stands upright in the tossed bow of the flying boat; wrapt in fleecy foam, the towing whale is forty feet ahead. Handling the long lance lightly, glancing twice or thrice along its length to see if it be exactly straight, Stubb whistlingly gathers up the coil of the warp in one hand, so as to secure its free end in his grasp, leaving the rest unobstructed. Then holding the lance full before his waistband's middle, he levels it at the whale; when covering him with it, he steadily depresses the butt-end in his hand, thereby elevating the point till the weapon stands fairly balanced upon his palm, fifteen feet in the air. He minds you somewhat of a juggler, balancing a long staff on his chin. Next moment with a rapid, nameless impulse, in a superb lofty arch the bright steel spans the foaming distance, and quivers in the life spot of the whale. Instead of sparkling water, he now spouts red blood.

"That drove the spigot out of him!" cries Stubb. "'Tis July's immortal

Fourth; all fountains must run wine to-day! Would now, it were old Orleans whiskey, or old Ohio, or unspeakable old Monongahela! Then, Tashtego, lad, I'd have ye hold a canakin to the jet, and we'd drink round it! Yea, verily, hearts alive, we'd brew choice punch in the spread of his spouthole there, and from that live punch-bowl quaff the living stuff!"

Again and again to such gamesome talk, the dexterous dart is repeated, the spear returning to its master like a greyhound held in skilful leash. The agonized whale goes into his flurry; the towline is slackened, and the pitchpoler dropping astern, folds his hands, and mutely watches the monster die.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is the boarding sword used for?
2. What do some whalers do to the bottoms of their boats? Why?
3. Compare pitchpoling with harpooning. Name and describe the instrument used in pitchpoling. When is it done?

**Benjamin Franklin**

## How to Construct a Lightning Rod

*Benjamin Franklin, printer, scientist, diplomat, author — the most versatile genius produced in America — made expository prose a form of art. Good writing should be "smooth, clear, and short," he said, and he realized this ideal in his directions for erecting a lightning rod. Many of his most original scientific theories were expressed in his correspondence.*

(To David Hume)

London, January 24, 1762

Dear Sir,

In compliance with my Lord Marischal's request, communicated to me by you, when I last had the pleasure of seeing you, I now send you what at present appears to me to be the shortest and simplest method of securing buildings, &c., from the mischiefs of lightning. Prepare a steel rod five or six feet long, half an inch thick at its biggest end, and tapering to a sharp point; which point should be gilt to prevent its rusting. Let the big end of the rod have a strong eye or ring



of half an inch diameter: Fix this rod upright to the chimney or highest part of the house, by means of staples, so as it may be kept steady. Let the pointed end be upwards, and rise three or four feet above the chimney or building that the rod is fixed to. Drive into the ground an iron rod of about an inch diameter, and ten or twelve feet long, that has also an eye or ring in its upper end. It is best that the rod should be at some distance from the foundation of the building, not nearer than ten feet, if your ground will allow so much. Then take as much length of iron rod of about half an inch diameter, as will reach from the eye in the rod above, to that in the rod below; and fasten it securely to those rods, by passing its ends through the rings, and bending those ends till they likewise form rings.

This length of rod may either be in one or several pieces. If in several, let the ends of the pieces be also well hooked to each other. Then close and cover every joint with lead, which is easily done, by making a small bag of strong paper round the joint, tying it close below, and then pouring in the melted lead; it being of use in these junctures, that there should be a considerable quantity of metalline contact between piece and piece. For, if they were only hooked together and so touched each other but in points, the lightning, in passing through them, might melt and break them where they join. The lead will also prevent the weakening of the joints by rust. To prevent the shaking of this rod by the wind, you may secure it by a few staples to the building, till it comes down within ten feet of the ground, and thence carry it off to your ground rod; near to which should be planted a post, to support the iron conductor above the heads of people walking under it.

If the building be large and long, as an hundred feet or upwards, it may not be amiss to erect a pointed rod at each end, and form a communication by an iron rod between them. If there be a well near the house, so that you can by such a rod form a communication from your top rod to the water, it is rather better to do so than to use the ground rod above mentioned. It may also be proper to paint the iron, to render it more durable by preserving it from rust.

A building thus guarded, will not be damaged by lightning, nor any person or thing therein killed, hurt, or set on fire. For, either the explosion will be prevented by the operation of the point; or, if not prevented, then the whole quantity of lightning exploded near the house, whether passing from the cloud to the earth or from the earth to the cloud, will be conveyed in rods. And, though the iron be crooked round the corner of the building, or make ever so many turns between the upper and lower rod, the lightning will follow it, and be guided by it, without affecting the building. I omit the philosophical reasons and experiments on which this practice is founded; for they are many, and would make a book. Besides they are already known to most of the learned throughout Europe. In the American British colonies, many houses have been, since the year 1752,

guarded by these principles. Three facts have only come to my knowledge of the effects of lightning on such houses.

If I have not been explicit enough in my directions, I shall, on the least intimation, endeavour to supply the defect.

I am, &c.

B. Franklin

#### QUESTIONS

1. When were lightning rods first used in this country?
2. What should be done to the joints which connect pieces of rod? Why?
3. Draw a sketch illustrating Franklin's directions for a lightning rod, giving dimensions, distances, etc.
4. How should a large, long building be protected from lightning?

Wolfgang Langewiesche

## The Romance of the High-Line

*For a biographical sketch of Wolfgang Langewiesche,*

*see page 318.*

A high-tension line is ugly, dangerous-looking, attractive to the mind. Those steel towers, running through the scenery like men with stacks of pottery — where from? Where to? What really is their business?

The most high-tension of all U.S. high-lines runs 477 miles from the West Virginia coal region through Ohio and Indiana toward Chicago. The men with the pottery, in this case, are carrying coal in the form of electric energy. If instead of carrying power made from coal this system had to carry the coal itself, it would have to move coal at the rate of five tons a minute. The way it is, there is no fuss, noise, smell or motion; just six wires swooping from mast to mast, full of mysterious stuff.

What *is* high-tension? Hard to say. The electrical engineer explains it thus: Electricity in a wire is like water in a pipe. Tension, also called voltage because

you measure it in volts, is the water pressure. Current, measured in amperes, is the water flow — so many gallons per minute. Tension is what makes electricity jump as a spark. Current is what makes electricity heat up a wire.

The power of electricity consists of both, the current and the tension. The engineer selects different combinations for different jobs. Household current, for example, comes at low tension — 115 volts. This makes it safer. But if you tried to transmit a big current long-distance at low tension the transmission line would become a vast electric heater — heating the great outdoors. Very little power would arrive at the other end. To keep the “line loss” down, therefore, the engineer keeps the current low, the tension way up. “High” in a high-line is 330,000 volts.

At 330,000 volts, electricity is a raging beast trying to get out of a cage. It wants to jump off the wire at anything that will lead it to the ground. (The ground is the great electrical neutral, where all electric tension is relieved.) It wants to jump, for instance, at the steel towers of the high-line itself and go into the ground through them. If you were fool enough to climb a tower, your skin would begin to prickle and your hair stand on end as the stuff began to think about jumping at *you*! This ferocious urge is what high-tension is, why it has such power. Offer it a path through motors and lamps on its way to the ground and the stuff will run factories and light towns.

Each mast of a high-tension line is like a Christmas tree, loaded with gadgets. The insulators that the wire hangs on are nearly three yards long; that's how far the wire must be held away from the steel of the tower so the stuff won't jump. They look like stacks of cheap pottery; but they are the best porcelain there is. They take a beating. the sun heats them, rain chills them, winter cold shrinks them. And all the time the heavy wire hangs on them, and the electric force, too, is poking at every molecule, trying to find a way through. Cracked insulators are the main thing that high-lines are patrolled for — usually by low-flying light airplanes.

The wire itself is really a cable, almost as thick as a woman's wrist. It has a steel core for strength; around this is wrapped jute for bulk. Around this, spiraling, run the aluminum wires that carry the current. A smaller wire runs from mast top to mast top without insulators. Lightning is invited to strike it, rather than the line itself.

Lightning used to knock out power lines for days. Or it flashed down the line into the power plants and substations and wrecked the machines. Now, the moment a bolt strikes, giant switches take the current off the line. They are operated by compressed air, very fast: within a fifth of a second they break the current, wait for the lightning effects to dissipate, and restore service. All *you* notice is a flick of your lights.

The most serious problem on the high-line is an ice storm. It's not the weight of the ice; it's the wind, acting on wires coated with ice, that sets them to “danc-

ing." If two wires tangle there is a flash, and the line is knocked out. They now fight icing with electric heat. An excessively heavy current is pushed through a wire, 100 miles of line at a time: the wire warms up; the ice melts off before it gets too bad.

The West Virginia-Ohio-Indiana high-line starts at a gigantic power plant in the deep-cut valley of the Kanawha River in the Alleghenies. It's not water power; it's a steam plant, burning coal. Many people think that electric power is always water power when high-lines start near dams. Not so.

Seventy-seven percent of all electricity in this country is made by steam because steam power is now more practical than water power. True, the water is free, but the dams and lakes are expensive. The good dam sites are mostly taken, at least in the East; further water power has to use grade-B sites, which means bigger dams and bigger lakes. Steam, by contrast, has been getting more efficient right along. In 1926 it took nearly a pound and a half of coal to make one horsepower for one hour. Today it takes only a shade more than half a pound.

How does a power plant make electricity? If you move a magnet past a wire, an electric impulse is set up in the wire. A generator contains coils of wire, arranged in a ring. Inside the ring a set of powerful magnets is spun by a turbine. As each magnet whips past each coil of wire, a pulse of current flows in that coil. The coils are connected to the high-line, and there you are! When an electric fan turns in your house it turns because at the very same instant, miles away, a turbine turns.

And what's a turbine? Simply a farmer's windmill glorified. In a steam turbine, a hurricane of steam blows at it; in a water turbine, water flows through it. In both, the whole thing is tightly encased and you see nothing.

At the West Virginia plant I saw some reasons why power is cheap. First, size. Everything is gigantic. The boiler which produces the steam is 11 stories high; the engineers travel up and down its side by elevator.

Then there's the way they burn the coal. It's ground in giant coffee mills into a fine powder, then blown into the firebox by a jet of air, as if it were oil. It burns completely. This means more heat per pound of coal — hence more power. It also means no soot. Power men are proud of being such clean citizens. Their smoke comes out white. They like to call it "vapor."

After the steam has run through the turbines it is condensed into water again. This is done by cooling it with water, and for big-scale power-making it takes a whole river or a lake. That is why most power plants are on the water. (You also need a cheap way to bring coal to the plant, such as by barge.)

I got into my little airplane and followed the high-line toward the consumer. I thought I knew what was coming. I'd seen the power being made; here it was being transmitted; presently would come the towns, with homes and factories where it was used.

Not so at all! The high-line ran for 60 miles over hill and dale and came out

at another power plant on the Ohio River. There it split. I followed one branch and in 50 miles came to still another power plant. I went on, to still another power plant. Gradually I began to understand what I was seeing. Here was a whole vast *system* composed of power plants and power lines.

This one is called the AGE System (for American Gas & Electric Co.). It serves a seven-state region — Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana and Michigan. It does for its region very much what TVA does for its valley: a big-time vitalizing job, with special stress on the back country. But this one is “*private power*.” AGE is the world’s biggest private system in power.

A power system is like a city waterworks, with a dozen pumping stations (power plants) keeping up the pressure (voltage), while thousands and thousands of households and factories set up a drain. The power companies have worked themselves into a position where they have to give service, or else. Even a slight sagging of power, such as sometimes makes your lights go dim, is intolerable to a textile plant, say. It makes different machines slow up differently; threads are stretched here, slackened there; material comes out with faulty weaves.

In a “system” the power plants can take over one another’s loads. Here’s the logic of it: A town with only one power plant needs a second plant as a stand-by. This is expensive. Five towns with five power plants, connected by high-lines, still need only one stand-by plant: this makes more sense. But ten towns, connected by high-lines, need no stand-by plant at all. If one plant breaks down, the other nine between them can carry the load. One hundred towns, tied into one system, still need only ten power plants — simply bigger ones. This is the most economical setup of all.

AGE serves 2319 towns, with many big industries, almost entirely from 12 big plants.

Further to insure service, there is also a system of systems. The high-lines of AGE connect up with those of TVA, of the Chicago area, of the industrial Carolinas and others. From the Texas border to Pennsylvania, from Wisconsin to Florida, all high-lines are, electrically, one. Similar “power pools” exist for New England, for the Pacific Northwest, for Pennsylvania-New Jersey. In these pools, if one system falls behind the demand, electricity starts flowing in from the neighboring systems; it’s metered and it has to be paid for; but it’s automatic, and it’s instant.

Everybody wants electricity at the same time. The “load” starts building up at 6 a.m. and goes to a peak by 11, then eases for lunch; an afternoon peak, and then the load goes down. At night, part of the system is idle.

A power plant must be steered, so to speak, up and down this daily curve. This is where a system cashes in on being a system: all its power plants are controlled from one spot. AGE’s Dispatching Center is a strangely unimpressive place — a small office upstairs in a suburban shopping center in Columbus,

Ohio. No giant switches here. It's a thinking station for engineers, specialists in the special art of "economic loading" of a system. And what does it think about? Money.

Say the day turns cloudy. Office workers are turning their lights on: more power is needed. How should this added load be distributed among the various plants so it will cost the least? The power plants vary in age and therefore in efficiency. The cost of coal is different for each plant. Each plant is at a different distance from the market and "line loss" must be considered. No man can do the math of all this fast enough. Yet it must be figured. On a system so vast, if you can chisel down your coal consumption one percent you save \$400,000 a year!

The dispatcher used to find the answer on an oversize slide rule the size of a school blackboard. He adjusted the system every 15 minutes, telling each power plant how much to throttle back. This slide rule and the math in it were engineering triumphs. But now comes automation: A giant electronic brain steers the system second by second and keeps it locked, so to speak, at best economy.

The wiring diagram of a high-tension system is like a road map. main highways branch off into local roads, residential streets, private driveways. This takes more doing than you might think. Problem: high-tension electricity is hard to handle and very dangerous; low-tension electricity won't travel any distance.

Solution: the transformer — a machine for changing the voltage of electric energy to suit the purpose. It's just two coils of wire, close together but not connected. As high-voltage electricity pulses through one coil, it sends out electromagnetic waves; these whip, electrically, the other coil, and make low-voltage electricity flow in it!

A transformer works only with "alternating current" (AC) — the kind that pulses back and forth in the wires. The steady-flowing direct current (DC) cannot be transformed so simply. That is why AC is now standard all over the world. It's this combination of ideas — AC and the transformer — that has made it possible to wire a whole country for power.

As the high-line approaches a town, it goes into a substation. You've seen them: an acre or two of ground, covered with a labyrinth of masts and wires, cagelike. In the cage is a battery of gray-painted hulks: those are transformers. They step the voltage down to something tamer — say, 33,000 volts. A pole line of more ordinary type now takes this stuff in a loop around the town to smaller substations. You've seen those, too: a fenced-in yard with a large sign: **DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE KEEP OUT**. Inside, another transformer steps the voltage down to, say, 4000. Ordinary neighborhood pole lines then take the power along a street or road.

And then, one more step. If you'll look just outside your house you'll see it. It's just a can, painted gray or black, high up on a power pole. Inside is still

another transformer. This tames the power down to household voltage; and from there it flows into your house, ready to work.

Power-by-wire is quite an invention. It lets you manufacture electricity in wholesale lots where it is cheapest to make, lets you use it where you need it — piecemeal, in vacuum cleaners and refrigerators and power tools. It means clean power in quantity — anytime, anywhere, as far as the high-lines run.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Why is high voltage necessary? What are transformers for?
2. List three things which cause trouble on the high-line
3. What kinds of power are used to generate electricity? Which is most popular in this country today?
4. How does a power plant make electricity?
5. What are the advantages of a system of power plants and power lines?

Rachel L. Carson

## The Global Thermostat

*Rachel Carson is a marine biologist and science writer whose best-seller, The Sea Around Us, received the National Book Award for Non-Fiction in 1951. In 1952 Miss Carson resigned her position as chief editor in the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to devote full time to writing, and, with the aid of a Guggenheim Fellowship, produced The Edge of the Sea (1955). "As a writer," she says, "my interest is divided between the presentation of facts and the interpretation of their underlying significance, with emphasis, I think, toward the latter."*

Out of the chamber of the south cometh the storm,  
And cold out of the north.

#### THE BOOK OF JOB

When the building of the Panama Canal was first suggested, the project was severely criticized in Europe. The French, especially, complained that such a canal would allow the waters of the Equatorial Current to escape into the Pacific, that there would then be no Gulf Stream, and that the winter climate of Europe

From *The Sea Around Us* by Rachel L. Carson. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press, Inc.

would become unbearably frigid. The alarmed Frenchmen were completely wrong in their forecast of oceanographic events, but they were right in their recognition of a general principle — the close relation between climate and the pattern of ocean circulation.

There are recurrent schemes for deliberately changing — or attempting to change — the pattern of the currents and so modifying climate at will. We hear of projects for diverting the cold Oyashio from the Asiatic coast, and of others for controlling the Gulf Stream. About 1912 the Congress of the United States was asked to appropriate money to build a jetty from Cape Race eastward across the Grand Banks to obstruct the cold water flowing south from the Arctic. Advocates of the plan believed that the Gulf Stream would then swing in nearer the mainland of the northern United States and would presumably bring us warmer winters. The appropriation was not granted. Even if the money had been provided, there is little reason to suppose that engineers then — or later — could have succeeded in controlling the sweep of the ocean's currents. And fortunately so, for most of these plans would have effects different from those popularly expected. Bringing the Gulf Stream closer to the American east coast, for example, would make our winters worse instead of better. The Atlantic coast of North America is a lee shore, with the prevailing winds from the west. The air masses that have lain over the Gulf Stream seldom reach us. But the Stream, with its mass of warm water, does have something to do with bringing our weather to us. The cold winds of winter are pushed by gravity toward the low-pressure areas over the warm water. The winter of 1916, when Stream temperatures were above normal, was long remembered for its cold and snowy weather along the east coast. If we could move the Stream inshore, the result in winter would be colder, stronger winds from the interior of the continent — not milder weather.

But if the eastern North American climate is not dominated by the Gulf Stream, it is far otherwise for the lands lying 'downstream.' From the Newfoundland Banks, as we have seen, the warm water of the Stream drifts eastward, pushed along by the prevailing westerly winds. Almost immediately, however, it divides into several branches. One flows north to the western shore of Greenland; there the warm water attacks the ice brought around Cape Farewell by the East Greenland Current. Another passes to the southwest coast of Iceland and, before losing itself in arctic waters, brings a gentling influence to the southern shores of that island. But the main branch of the Gulf Stream or North Atlantic Drift flows eastward. Soon it divides again. The southernmost of these branches turns toward Spain and Africa and re-enters the Equatorial Current. The northernmost branch, hurried eastward by the winds blowing around the Icelandic 'low,' piles up against the coast of Europe the warmest water found at comparable latitudes anywhere in the world. From the Bay of Biscay north its influence is felt. And as the current rolls northeastward along the Scandi-



navian coast, it sends off many lateral branches that curve back westward to bring the breath of warm water to the arctic islands and to mingle with other currents in intricate whirls and eddies. The west coast of Spitsbergen, warmed by one of these lateral streams, is bright with flowers in the arctic summer; the east coast, with its polar current, remains barren and forbidding. Passing around the North Cape, the warm currents keep open such harbors as Hammerfest and Murmansk, although Riga, 800 miles farther south on the shores of the Baltic, is choked with ice. Somewhere in the Arctic Sea, near the island of Novaya Zemlya, the last traces of Atlantic water disappear, losing themselves at last in the overwhelming sweep of the icy northern sea.

It is always a warm-water current, but the temperature of the Gulf Stream nevertheless varies from year to year, and a seemingly slight change profoundly affects the air temperatures of Europe. The British meteorologist, C. E. P. Brooks, compares the North Atlantic to 'a great bath, with a hot tap and two cold taps.' The hot tap is the Gulf Stream; the cold taps are the East Greenland Current and the Labrador Current. Both the volume and the temperature of the hot-water tap vary. The cold taps are nearly constant in temperature but vary immensely in volume. The adjustment of the three taps determines surface temperatures in the eastern Atlantic and has a great deal to do with the weather of Europe and with happenings in arctic seas. A very slight winter warming of the eastern Atlantic temperatures means, for example, that the snow cover of northwestern Europe will melt earlier, that there will be an earlier thawing of the ground, that spring plowing may begin earlier, and that the harvest will be better. It means, too, that there will be relatively little ice near Iceland in the spring and that the amount of drift ice in the Barents Sea will diminish a year or two later. These relations have been clearly established by European scientists. Some day long-range weather forecasts for the continent of Europe will probably be based in part on ocean temperatures. But at present there are no means for collecting the temperatures over a large enough area, at frequent enough intervals.

For the globe as a whole, the ocean is the great regulator, the great stabilizer of temperatures. It has been described as 'a savings bank for solar energy, receiving deposits in seasons of excessive insolation and paying them back in seasons of want.' Without the ocean, our world would be visited by unthinkable harsh extremes of temperature. For the water that covers three-fourths of the earth's surface with an enveloping mantle is a substance of remarkable qualities. It is an excellent absorber and radiator of heat. Because of its enormous heat capacity, the ocean can absorb a great deal of heat from the sun without becoming what we would consider 'hot,' or it can lose much of its heat without becoming 'cold.'

Through the agency of ocean currents, heat and cold may be distributed over thousands of miles. It is possible to follow the course of a mass of warm

water that originates in the trade-wind belt of the Southern Hemisphere and remains recognizable for a year and a half, through a course of more than 7000 miles. This redistributing function of the ocean tends to make up for the uneven heating of the globe by the sun. As it is, ocean currents carry hot equatorial water toward the poles and return cold water equator-ward by such surface drifts as the Labrador Current and Oyashio, and even more importantly by deep currents. The redistribution of heat for the whole earth is accomplished about half by the ocean currents, and half by the winds.

At that thin interface between the ocean of water and the ocean of overlying air, lying as they do in direct contact over by far the greater part of the earth, there are continuous interactions of tremendous importance.

The atmosphere warms or cools the ocean. It receives vapors through evaporation, leaving most of the salts in the sea and so increasing the salinity of the water. With the changing weight of that whole mass of air that envelops the earth, the atmosphere brings variable pressure to bear on the surface of the sea, which is depressed under areas of high pressure and springs up in compensation under the atmospheric lows. With the moving force of the winds, the air grips the surface of the ocean and raises it into waves, drives the currents onward, lowers sea level on lee shores, and raises it on windward shores.

But even more does the ocean dominate the air. Its effect on the temperature and humidity of the atmosphere is far greater than the small transfer of heat from air to sea. It takes 3000 times as much heat to warm a given volume of water  $1^{\circ}$  as to warm an equal volume of air by the same amount. The heat lost by a cubic meter of water on cooling  $1^{\circ}$  C. would raise the temperature of 3000 cubic meters of air by the same amount. Or to use another example, a layer of water a meter deep, on cooling  $.1^{\circ}$  could warm a layer of air 33 meters thick by  $10^{\circ}$ . The temperature of the air is intimately related to atmospheric pressures. Where the air is cold, pressure tends to be high; warm air favors low pressures. The transfer of heat between ocean and air therefore alters the belts of high and low pressure; this profoundly affects the direction and strength of the winds and directs the storms on their paths.

There are six more or less permanent centers of high pressure over the oceans, three in each hemisphere. Not only do these areas play a controlling part in the climate of surrounding lands, but they affect the whole world because they are the birthplaces of most of the dominant winds of the globe. The trade winds originate in high-pressure belts of the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Over all the vast extent of ocean across which they blow, these great winds retain their identity; it is only over the continents that they become interrupted, confused, and modified.

In other ocean areas there are belts of low pressure, which develop, especially in winter, over waters that are then warmer than the surrounding lands. Traveling barometric depressions or cyclonic storms are attracted by these

areas; they move rapidly across them or skirt around their edges. So winter storms take a path across the Icelandic 'low' and over the Shetlands and Orkneys into the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea; other storms are directed by still other low pressure areas over the Skagerrak and the Baltic into the interior of Europe. Perhaps more than any other condition, the low-pressure area over the warm water south of Iceland dominates the winter climate of Europe.

And most of the rains that fall on sea and land alike were raised from the sea. They are carried as vapor in the winds, and then with change of temperature the rains fall. Most of the European rain comes from evaporation of Atlantic water. In the United States, vapor and warm air from the Gulf of Mexico and the tropical waters of the western Atlantic ride the winds up the wide valley of the Mississippi and provide rains for much of the eastern part of North America.

Whether any place will know the harsh extremes of a continental climate or the moderating effect of the sea depends less on its nearness to the ocean than on the pattern of currents and winds and the relief of the continents. The east coast of North America receives little benefit from the sea, because the prevailing winds are from the west. The Pacific coast, on the other hand, lies in the path of the westerly winds that have blown across thousands of miles of ocean. The moist breath of the Pacific brings climatic mildness and creates the dense rain forests of British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon; but its full influence is largely restricted to a narrow strip by the coast ranges that follow a course parallel to the sea. Europe, in contrast, is wide open to the sea, and 'Atlantic weather' carries hundreds of miles into the interior.

By a seeming paradox, there are parts of the world that owe their desert dryness to their nearness to the ocean. The aridity of the Atacama and Kalahari deserts is curiously related to the sea. Wherever such marine deserts occur, there is found this combination of circumstances: a western coast in the lee of the prevailing winds, and a cold coastwise current. So on the west coast of South America the cold Humboldt streams northward off the shores of Chile and Peru — the great return flow of Pacific waters seeking the equator. The Humboldt, it will be remembered, is cold because it is continuously being reinforced by the upwelling of deeper water. The presence of this cold water offshore helps create the aridity of the region. The onshore breezes that push in toward the hot land in the afternoons are formed of cool air that has lain over a cool sea. As they reach the land they are forced to rise into the high coastal mountains — the ascent cooling them more than the land can warm them. So there is little condensation of water vapor, and although the cloud banks and the fogs forever seem to promise rain, the promise is not fulfilled so long as the Humboldt rolls on its accustomed course along these shores. On the stretch from Arica to Caldera there is normally less than an inch of rain in a year. It is a beautifully balanced system — as long as it remains in balance. What happens when the Humboldt is temporarily displaced is nothing short of catastrophic.

At irregular intervals the Humboldt is deflected away from the South American continent by a warm current of tropical water that comes down from the north. These are years of disaster. The whole economy of the area is adjusted to the normal aridity of climate. In the years of El Niño, as the warm current is called, torrential rains fall — the downpouring rains of the equatorial regions let loose upon the dust-dry hillsides of the Peruvian coast. The soil washes away, the mud huts literally dissolve and collapse, crops are destroyed. Even worse things happen at sea. The cold-water fauna of the Humboldt sickens and dies in the warm water, and the birds that fish the cold sea for a living must either migrate or starve.

Those parts of the coast of Africa that are bathed by the cool Benguela Current also lie in the lee of high land. The easterly winds are dry, descending winds, and the cool breezes from the sea have their moisture capacity increased by contact with the hot land. Mists form over the cold waters and roll in over the coast, but in a whole year the rainfall is the meagerest token. The mean rainfall at Swakopmund in Walvis Bay is 0.7 inches a year. But again this is true only as long as the Benguela holds sway along the coast, for there are times when the cold stream falters as does the Humboldt, and here also these are years of disaster.

The transforming influence of the sea is portrayed with beautiful clarity in the striking differences between the Arctic and Antarctic regions. As everyone knows, the Arctic is a nearly land-locked sea; the Antarctic, a continent surrounded by ocean. Whether this global balancing of a land pole against a water pole has a deep significance in the physics of the earth is uncertain; but the bearing of the fact on the climates of the two regions is plainly evident.

The ice-covered Antarctic continent, bathed by seas of uniform coldness, is in the grip of the polar anticyclone. High winds blow from the land and repel any warming influence that might seek to penetrate it. The mean temperature of this bitter world is never above the freezing point. On exposed rocks the lichens grow, covering the barrenness of cliffs with their gray or orange growths, and here and there over the snow is the red dust of the hardier algae. Mosses hide in the valleys and crevices less exposed to the winds, but of the higher plants only a few impoverished stands of grasses have managed to invade this land. There are no land mammals; the fauna of the Antarctic continent consists only of insects — a wingless mosquito, a few flies, a microscopic mite.

In sharp contrast are the arctic summers, where the tundra is bright with many-colored flowers. Everywhere except on the Greenland icecap and some of the arctic islands, summer temperatures are high enough for the growth of plants, packing a year's development into the short, warm, arctic summer. The polar limit of plant growth is set not by latitude, but by the sea. For the influence of the warm Atlantic penetrates strongly within the Arctic Sea, entering, as we have seen, through the one large break in the land girdle, the Greenland Sea.

But the streams of warm Atlantic water that enter the icy northern seas bring the gentling touch that makes the Arctic, in climate as well as in geography, a world apart from the Antarctic.

So, day by day and season by season, the ocean dominates the world's climate.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Name the chief warm water current in the Atlantic Ocean. Name a cold water current.
2. Why did the French object to the building of the Panama Canal?
3. What is "a savings bank for solar energy"?
4. Where do the rains of the eastern United States come from?
5. What is the chief difference between the Arctic and the Antarctic? Which is colder?

*Dr. J. Bronowski was born in Poland in 1908 and went to England at the age of twelve. He had therefore to learn English and science together, and ever since he has coupled the two interests. His books on English literature include The Poet's Defence (1939) and a well-known life of William Blake entitled A Man Without a Mask (1944). But he has remained a practicing mathematician, and was Scientific Deputy to the British Mission which reported on the effects of the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He is now Director of the Central Research Establishment of the National Coal Board in Great Britain. He is the author of a classical exposition of modern scientific method entitled The Common Sense of Science (1951), which is unique in being designed to be understandable and valuable both to scientists and to laymen.*

Men have been talking about the atom now, off and on, for two thousand years. Yet to this day nobody has ever seen an atom; until twenty years ago, nobody had seen anything which even resembled an atom. Then why have we been so sure, all these two thousand years, that the atom was there, somewhere at the heart of matter, if only we could find it?

The reason, oddly, has little to do with scientific experiment and finesse. It is a solid logical reason, which remains as plain today as it was to the Greeks who first thought of it. If I put a lump of salt on my tongue, I know at once what it is: it tastes salt. If I crumble the lump into grains and taste only a grain, I still know it to be salt. If I put the grain under the microscope and pick it apart into its tiny crystals, each crystal is still salt and nothing else. We can shatter the little glittering crystal into smaller crystals; the process of breaking can go on and on; but it is not conceivable that it can go on forever.

There must be a smallest unit of salt beyond which we cannot go if we want still to have salt. There must be a tiniest unit of sugar which remains sugar, and in the same way there must be characteristic units of every substance — iron and the green chlorophyll in leaves, and pencil lead and vitamin B<sub>12</sub>. A patient may be cured of pernicious anemia by as little as a millionth of an ounce of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>. But still there must be a smallest piece of the vitamin which makes it B<sub>12</sub>.

This is the picture of matter which we have had since the Greeks. A substance is made up of tiny pieces, each of them itself indivisible, each alike, and each

characteristic of that substance and not something else. The Greeks called these pieces atoms, which means “indivisible.”

It is important to begin this way, historically and logically. For this makes us aware that our idea of an atom starts from common sense; it is based on everyday notions and experiences which we all share. Of course we have to go on from these to more modern and detailed conceptions. But even those, we must remember, are attempts to find simplicity and order in the bewildering variety of natural substances. Never believe that the atom is a complex mystery — it is not. The atom is what we find when we look for the underlying architecture in nature, whose bricks are as few, as simple and as orderly as possible.

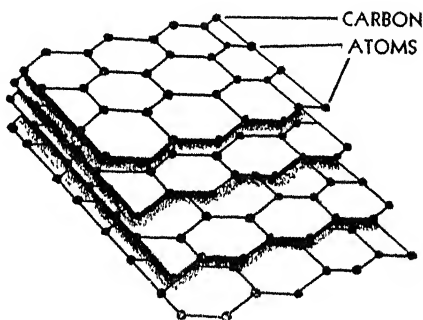
With that, we are ready to begin our questioning of nature.

### *What Is an Atom?*

An atom is the smallest piece of an elementary substance which is characteristic of that substance and not something else.

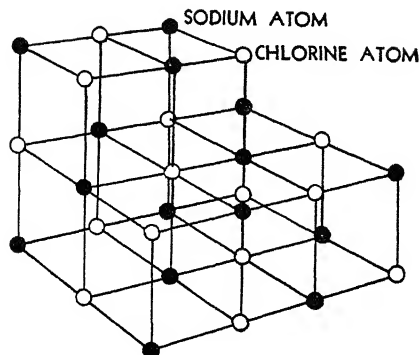
This is still the Greek answer, but we have narrowed it by adding one word — the word “elementary.” The Greeks only thought of cutting up a lump of salt physically. We have learned in the last 150 years that it can also be taken apart chemically, reduced to two more elementary substances, sodium and chlorine. Therefore nowadays we distinguish between compound substances, which can be taken apart chemically, and elementary substances, which cannot. We reserve the word atom for the smallest unit of one of these elementary substances.

Here is a picture of the atoms in the elementary substance, pencil lead:



**GRAPHITE PARTICLE.** *They are all alike, for they are all atoms of carbon. They are stacked neatly in sheets. And in each sheet they make a honeycomb of six-cornered cells.*

And here is a picture of a crystal of salt:



**SALT PARTICLE.** *The two elementary substances of which it is compounded have each their own atoms. They build up a strong square framework in which each kind of atom locks the other into place.*

#### *Where Are Atoms Found?*

Every substance is built up of atoms, either all of one kind or a linked arrangement of several kinds. Therefore, atoms are found everywhere where there is matter.

In a solid, atoms are arranged tidily as our pictures show. When the solid melts into a liquid the atoms wander from their neat stations, but they are not lost. And when the liquid boils up into a gas, the atoms dart about and take up more and more space. But the atoms are still there, everywhere, in solid, liquid and gas.

The air in your lungs at this instant is made up of atoms — about 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 of them. This will do as a figure to end all figures. It is, for example, a good deal more than the number of cells in the brains and bodies of all the 2,500,000,000 inhabitants of the world today, added together. It reminds us that the scale of the pictures we have just drawn is very large, that the atom is very small, and that it has no trouble in getting anywhere.

#### *Do Atoms Vary?*

This is the \$64 question. Of course, the answer is “Yes, indeed.” The atoms of one elementary substance are different from those of another. There are therefore as many kinds of atoms as there are elementary substances — about one hundred in all.

But this answer wins no prizes — yet. For the crux of the question lies deeper: in what way do the atoms vary one from another?

Sixty years ago we had no idea. Each kind of atom was permanent, indivisible, and different from every other; that was all we knew. Only since then have we discovered, slowly, step by step, and with mounting astonishment, that under



this variety lies a deeper unity. Nature, which has built its wealth of compounds, rocks and proteins, ores and sugars and living bones, all from only one hundred atoms — nature has a still more profound economy. For each atom itself has a structure — and a much simpler structure.

All atoms are assembled from three kinds of fundamental, electrical particles. They are:



It would be elegant if these fundamental particles were all equally heavy; but they are not. The proton and the neutron are heavy particles — each has almost 2,000 times the mass of an electron — but even they are not quite equal. And the electron is so light that it really seems to be nothing but a tiny charge of negative electricity.

Atoms vary only in the number of fundamental particles from which they are assembled.

Now we see that the question, Do atoms vary?, does indeed take us very deep. For hitherto we have looked at the atoms which make up matter only from the outside. Now we must go to the heart of matter — into the atom itself.

### *What Is the Atom's Structure?*

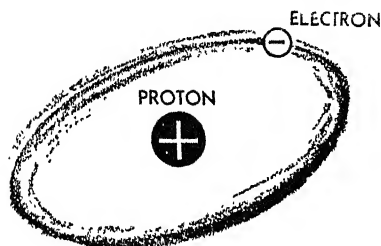
Every kind of atom has essentially the same structure. At the center there is a heavy kernel or nucleus; all the heavy particles in the atom are concentrated in this. Away on the outskirts of the atom are the light electrons.

The electrons are in constant movement. They circle around the nucleus, much like the planets circle around the sun. But their orbits are less precise, so that they form a kind of spinning cloud or shell.

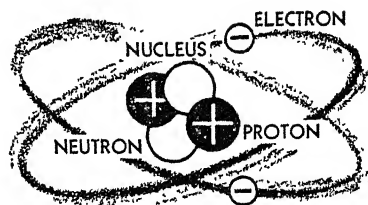
In fact, the electrons are only the outriders of the atom. They are lost and recovered, they wander off in an electric current, but still the atom remains essentially the same. For the solid substance and anchor of the atom is its heavy kernel or nucleus.

The nucleus is made up of protons and neutrons, tightly bound together. Their numbers are characteristic of each kind of atom. In particular, each elementary substance has a characteristic number of protons in its atoms. The nucleus of hydrogen has one proton, the nucleus of helium has two, and so on up the scale of nature to uranium, whose nucleus has ninety-two protons. Beyond this lie the new elements which man has created in the atomic pile — neptunium with a nucleus of ninety-three protons, plutonium with ninety-four, and higher still.

Here are pictures of these atoms:



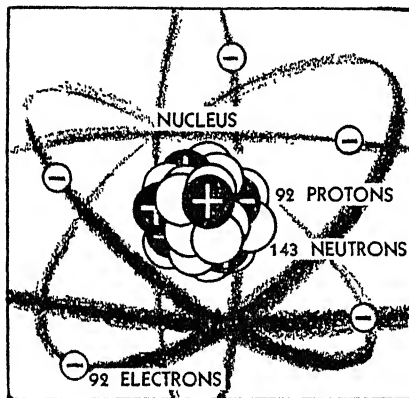
ATOM OF HYDROGEN



ATOM OF HELIUM

*The atom of ordinary hydrogen has only a proton for its nucleus and, to balance its electric charge, one electron circling around it. The atom of helium has a nucleus of two protons and two neutrons bound together; their electric charge is balanced by two electrons which circle around the nucleus at a distance.*

And here is a picture of the atom of explosive uranium:

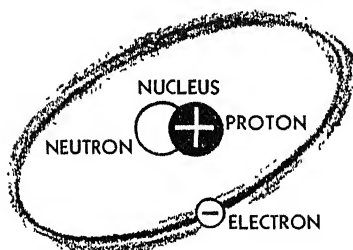


**ATOM OF EXPLOSIVE URANIUM.** *The nucleus is made up of 92 protons and 143 neutrons, and by way of electrical balance there are, on an average, 92 electrons circling on the outskirts of this atom.*

The picture of an atom of ordinary uranium would be the same, except that there would be three more neutrons in the center. For the two kinds of uranium are merely variants or isotopes of the same element, and isotopes differ by a few neutrons but nothing else.

For example, even the nucleus of hydrogen may have an extra neutron. This makes the atom into heavy hydrogen, which is a variant or isotope of hydrogen.

Here is its picture: ATOM OF HEAVY HYDROGEN



### *What Is Atomic Energy?*

The structure of the atom is held together by invisible forces. For example, there is an electrical attraction between the positive nucleus and the negative electrons. But this is a modest force, no more violent than that with which our sun holds the planets in their orbits.

The greater energy lies like a coiled spring in the nucleus itself. For the nucleus is full of protons which are all electrically positive, and which ought therefore to repel one another with enormous forces. Somehow these electrical forces are held in check; an unknown binding energy which we do not understand welds the protons and the neutrons into a single stable kernel.

Therefore, atomic energy is nuclear energy. It is the binding energy which holds the nucleus together, and checks the electrical repulsions which would make it fly violently apart.

### *How Is Atomic Energy Released?*

The nucleus of every atom is very stable. But some of the heavier atoms do from time to time fire off a part of the nucleus of their own accord. These are the naturally radioactive atoms, such as radium and uranium. In them, the nucleus tries to simplify itself spontaneously to a more stable form. For the most stable nucleus is neither among the very light nor the very heavy elements, but about half-way between.

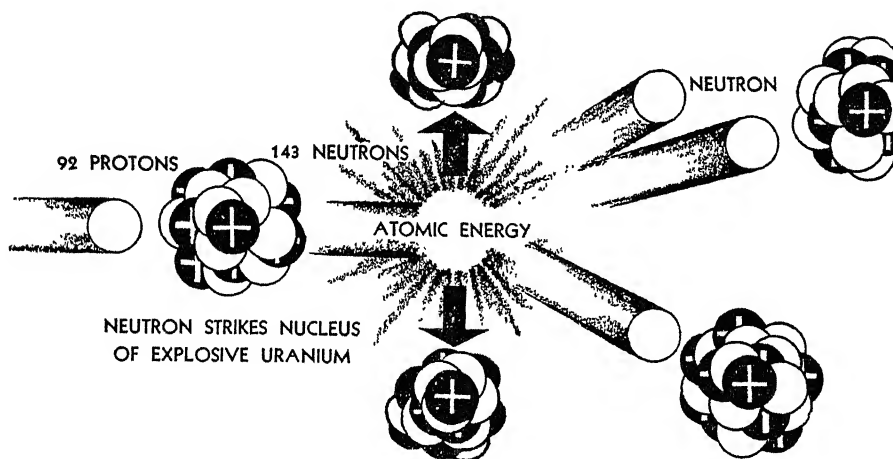
Whenever a nucleus rearranges itself in this way, from a less stable to a more stable structure, it releases some of its binding energy. All that we need to do is to offer the nucleus the chance, as it were, to rearrange itself; the energy will then fly out of itself. To offer it this chance we deliberately make the nucleus unstable, by striking and invading it with an extra proton or neutron. A proton has been used, but it has to be fired with great energy itself, because the positive nucleus repels its approach. The ideal tool to split the atom is the neutron, for it has no electrical force to overcome on its way to the nucleus.

When a neutron strikes a heavy nucleus it may invade it and make it unstable. The nucleus then breaks up to a more stable form. A nucleus which so rearranges itself from a less to a more stable structure releases some of its binding energy of itself.

Oddly, the rearrangement of the nucleus can be weighed: the parts now weigh less than the whole nucleus did before. The loss of mass exactly balances the energy which has been released — as Einstein foretold nearly fifty years ago.

### *What Is Fission?*

Fission is the breaking apart of atoms. It is brought about, as we have just seen, by striking a heavy nucleus with a neutron which invades it and makes it unstable.



**FISSION.** *Nucleus breaks into two roughly equal nuclei and releases an excess of energy (the “binding energy” that holds nucleus together). Total number of protons in two nuclei will be 92. Total number of neutrons will be less than the original 143. Escaping neutrons strike other explosive nuclei and so continue the chain reaction.*

But so long as we have to fire neutrons one by one, and break up atoms one by one, we can only get energy in penny packets. To make the breaking or fission of atoms worth while, we need a reaction which fires off neutrons of itself as it goes along. Such a reaction was discovered late in the Nineteen Thirties in the breakup of the explosive variant of uranium.

This is a remarkable reaction whose precise sequence in part remains secret. But what makes it remarkable is no secret. When this nucleus is struck by a neutron (see the drawing above) the nucleus breaks up in such a way that, in addition to two roughly equal halves, it also fires off several of its own neutrons. These fly through the rest of the material, and if the piece is large enough each neutron is certain to strike another nucleus and thus set off another burst of energy — and fire off still other neutrons to carry on the reaction.

Therefore, the fission of heavy atoms gives a large return of energy only if it carries itself on from atom to atom in a continuous chain. To do this, each nu-

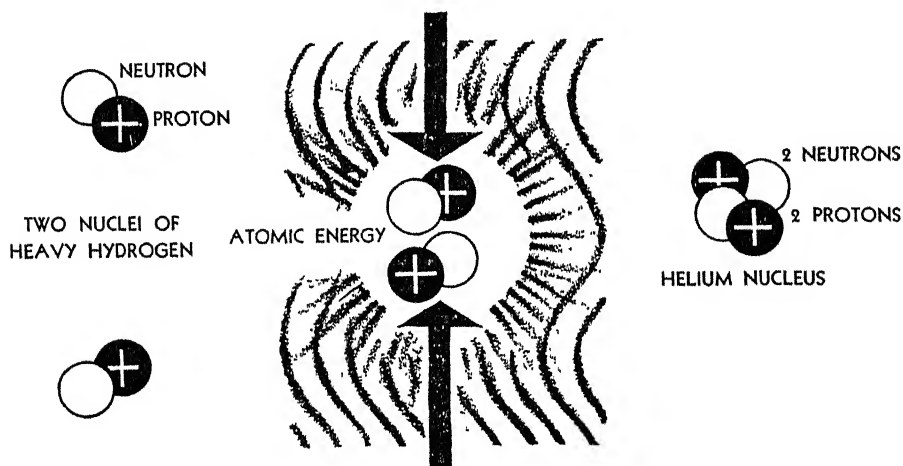
cleus which breaks up must itself fire off several of its own neutrons. The atoms which do this most violently are the explosive variant of uranium, which was used in the Hiroshima bomb, and man-made plutonium, which was used in the Nagasaki bomb.

### *What Is Fusion?*

A heavy nucleus which breaks up releases some of its binding energy because each of its halves is a more stable nucleus. The middling atoms are in fact more stable than the heavy atoms; and they are also more stable than the light atoms.

It is therefore possible to rearrange several light atoms so that they form a more stable nucleus, and to gain energy in this way. This is the building up or fusion of atoms.

The sun gets its heat in exactly this way, by the building or fusion of atoms. The sun and the stars use hydrogen as their raw material, and by a step-by-step process running at 20 million degrees Centigrade, they fuse atoms of hydrogen into a single helium nucleus. Ten years ago this process was beyond our dreams, because we could not hope to reach on earth temperatures measured in millions of degrees. But now the atomic bomb gives us a temperature of 50 million degrees for a millionth of a second, and this may be long enough to fire a mixture of heavy hydrogens and fuse them explosively into helium. Below is a picture of how the process might work in a bomb made of heavy hydrogen.



**FUSION.** *Under terrific heat two nuclei of hydrogen fuse and form a new element, helium. The weight of a nucleus of helium is less (4.00280) than the theoretical weight of two nuclei of hydrogen (4.03302). This loss in mass represents the energy created, for mass and energy are interconvertible — as Einstein showed years ago.*

The helium nucleus is a little lighter than the two parts that go to make it up, and is more stable. Once again the loss of mass is turned into extra energy which we can use.

### *Can Atomic Energy Benefit Man?*

The answer to this question is blunt: it can and it does, now, today and every day. Few people grasp this, even when they see it in print, because few people are yet at home in the language of atoms. And just this is why the language is worth learning.

What can an atomic pile do for us that is good? The pile is a concentrated source of neutrons. It uses these neutrons to turn ordinary uranium into explosive plutonium. But in the process, it gives out heat; and this heat is already being used for daily civilian purposes. It will soon be used as a source of power, to drive an engine or to generate electricity. There are desert places where no other way of generating electricity will do; to them the atomic pile could bring power and irrigation, and make the desert bloom.

But the neutrons in the pile are more than a source of power. They are also a source of radioactivity. The piles are today making radioactive cobalt and iron and iodine, which are helping to cure tumor patients every day. These radioactive cures are already a living part of good hospital practice.

The radioactive substances from the pile have another use, in medical and industrial research. By putting them into a plant or a machine we can, as it were, see growth and wear and all changes with new and infinitely sensitive eyes. The Geiger counter has become the eye of research, which picks up and traces the movement of radioactive atoms moment by moment. Today these, so to say, visible atoms tell the scientist how a wound heals, what goes to fill an ear of corn, and whether grease really gets into a bearing.

### *The Future of the Atom*

The wealth of the atom is here, in our hands and at our fingertips. If we do not reach it today we shall tomorrow. It is a power which we have made for ourselves, by experiment, by skill and search, but above all by thinking. The Greeks did not see atoms; they thought about them. Einstein, at 26, did not change mass into energy; he thought about the laws of nature, until he saw that mass and energy must be interchangeable forms of the same essence in nature. His thought comes true every time a heavy nucleus yields energy by fission, or a light nucleus yields energy as it is built up by fusion.

What use we make of this atomic energy is for us to choose. This is not a matter for scientists but for every citizen. The scientist can only offer the gift; the citizen must understand it in order that he may fulfill it. Einstein had been a lifelong pacifist when, in August, 1939, at the age of 60, he wrote to tell Presi-

dent Roosevelt that an atomic bomb could probably be made. His scientific insight was right; he offered it, and he left the use and the decision to the nation.

Three years later, an atomic pile was turning ordinary uranium into plutonium on a squash court in Chicago. That pile was not a weapon of war; it stood at a crossroads between peace and destruction. In medical and industrial research, in actual radioactive cures, and in the production of power, the atomic pile has now done as much for peace as for destruction.

For neither the fission of plutonium nor the fusion of hydrogen into helium are one-way roads to death. Like every great discovery, they offer an equal potential of happiness or disaster. They are the gift of science, and every scientist searches his heart at midnight to pray that the gift will bring a blessing. The prayer is in all our hearts; its fulfillment lies in all our hands.

### QUESTIONS

1. What does "atom" mean? How far back does the word go?
2. What is the essential structure of all atoms? What differences appear in various kinds of atoms? About how many kinds are there?
3. Why do the "heavy" atoms, like uranium or plutonium, produce violent explosions? Is it possible to use the lighter atoms for energy?
4. What is fission? fusion?
5. What is the "anchor" of the atom? How is the natural stability of the atom broken up, thus releasing atomic energy?
6. What is the "ideal tool" for this splitting operation?
7. What does an "atomic pile" consist of? What are some of its most valuable by-products?
8. What is the scientist's responsibility to civilization?

### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION III

1. Write a hundred word summary of the theory or process explained in each of these articles. Then compare your summaries with the original articles to see which you condensed most successfully. Why did you remember this particular process or theory?
2. Compare the beginnings (the first one hundred words) of the articles. What is the function of each (human interest, statement of subject, statement of organization, leading question, anecdote, etc.)? Which article has the most effective first paragraph?
3. Find examples of illuminating figures of speech or comparisons in these articles. Which writer relies most upon comparisons to clarify his explanation?
4. Quote passages in which Langewiesche, Tilden, and Bronowski simplify technical material in order to make it understandable to the average reader. Which of all the writers do you consider most successful in this?
5. Compare the endings of the articles. Do they conclude with a summary of the material or with some more general deduction from it? In what other ways may an explanatory article end?
6. Outline the selection which seems to you to have the clearest organization. Which selection do you consider least well organized?

## THEME TOPICS

1. Write a short theme explaining some simple process, like changing a tire or making a salad dressing. Use the technique of several numbered steps, with a brief anecdote as introduction, for interest, and a conclusion that brings out the value of this process.
2. Explain some special phase of your favorite sport — the drive in golf, the crawl in swimming, how to pitch in baseball, fly casting, etc. For clearness, give plenty of details.
3. Show how some system has worked out in your high school (for instance, student government), on campus (co-operative bookstore, honor system), or in your home town (bicycle safety).
4. Taking some familiar object at hand, like Langewiesche's "High-Line," explain its workings and significance. Possible subjects: a refrigerator, a reservoir, a telephone, an automatic transmission, a fireplace, a windmill, a piece of farm machinery, etc.
5. Explain a natural process, as Rachel Carson does in "Global Thermostat": for example, the growth of a plant, the ebb and flow of tides, an earthquake, a hurricane, soil erosion, rainfall, etc.
6. Parallel Bronowski by writing a clear explanation of television, electricity, photography, or a similar scientific subject.





## SECTION

# IV

## OPINION

If you enjoy a good argument in a bull session — if you have strong convictions about communism, world peace, baseball, or woman's place in the kitchen — you will like the opinion piece. This type of article is often featured on magazine covers; like the explanatory article, it can teach you something new, but frequently it will interest you more, because it appeals to your emotions, as well as your curiosity. The writer would like to get you on his side, and often succeeds. How does he do it?

Look at Allen Jackson's "A Laugh for the Olympics." The first question your reader will want answered, if you are writing on a controversial subject, is "Where do you stand?" What is your opinion, your *main idea*? Jackson doesn't keep the reader in doubt. He begins, "During the past year many newspapers and magazines in this country have felt obliged to print at least one article on the possibility of the Russians' winning the Olympic games. . . . But no matter who the author or what his variation on the same theme, every article has contained the same basic flaw: all of them have been entirely lacking in humor." That's hitting the nail on the head in the first paragraph, the first few sentences, a direct beginning you could well imitate.

Then, having stated your conviction, you should support it with some good, to-the-point arguments. Jackson says our attitude toward the Olympics lacks the saving grace of humor because 1. we criticize the Russians' "grim" approach to sport and ignore our own all-out efforts to win; 2. we say they persecute losers with harsh criticism but overlook our own denunciation of fallen champions; and 3. we charge them with professionalism while averting our eyes from athletic scholarships, "jobs," and extras with which we reward athletes. These charges are all relevant to his main point, that we are humorless and hypocritical about the Olympic Games. And their truth is supported by evidence: for example, the magazine photographs of football players with distorted expressions, as evidence that Americans, too, are "grim" in competition — and Jackson practices what he preaches by making his a humorous article.

In addition to limiting himself to relevant arguments, avoiding digressions and wordy repetitions of his point, Jackson has something of a *climactic order* in his presentation of the charges. *Climactic order* means building your article so that some of the strongest arguments come toward the end. Everyone is familiar, from newspaper reports of college investigations, with abuses in connection with "big-time" intercollegiate sport; by reminding us of these practices, in his most fully-developed argument (about a fourth as long as the whole article) just before the conclusion, Jackson forces us to admit to at least some hypocrisy and lack of humor in our attitude toward the Olympics.

Of course, *fairness toward your opponents* is essential in a good opinion article. A writer observes this by not making personal attacks and by freely acknowledging the merits of certain opposing arguments. Thus Lardner admits, albeit humorously, the number of spectators who disagree with his low estimate of soccer ("I say this in the full knowledge that several hundred million people around the world think soccer is wonderful.") Al Capp, defending his ideal of fantasy and humor in the comic strip, confesses to generous admiration for the creators of the suspense strips he dislikes ("Don't get me wrong. . . . *Dick Tracy* is a magnificently drawn, exquisitely written shocker comparable . . . with Poe."). Barzun, vigorously criticizing aptitude tests, makes the fair-minded admission, "Of course no validity is claimed for the test." Statements like these influence the reader to accept a writer's other, less favorable remarks, because the writer does not seem biased.

The greatest weakness of student themes of opinion, however, is *failure to present convincing evidence* in support of a thesis. A simple assertion like "Eighteen-year-olds ought to have the right to vote because they serve in the Army" will not resolve the doubts in an alert reader's mind (e.g., "What about girls?" "Is a youth mature enough to train for war necessarily mature enough to vote?"). But *statistical and factual evidence* (e.g., about self-government in schools, or services rendered a community by its youth) or *close logical reasoning* (e.g., the information needed to make an intelligent choice at the polls, the amount of such information possessed by the average eighteen-year-old compared to the average adult, leading to a conclusion) *will* sway the reader to your side. So may an *appeal to his emotions*.<sup>17</sup> Some of the other selections in this section illustrate these means of persuasion.

In "America's Next Twenty Years," for example, Peter Drucker presents statistical evidence to show that there has been a change in the "educational habits of the country": the 10 percent increase in college enrollments in 1954 when veterans studying under the G.I. Bill had all but disappeared and fewer young people were reaching college age. Will Herberg gives the same kind of evidence for the "contemporary upswing" of interest in religion: "95 per cent of the American people, according to a recent public opinion survey, declared themselves to be either Protestants, Catholics, or Jews," and "between 1926

and 1950 the population of continental United States increased 28.6 per cent; membership of religious bodies increased 59.8 per cent." You can very profitably employ this kind of evidence. Look up the accident records for a congested corner (for a theme advocating new traffic controls); or, if you are either criticizing or defending television, check the programs in the newspapers for objective evidence (lectures, plays, crime stories scheduled) that TV is, or is not, debasing culture — don't rely only on what you yourself happen to see.

You might also, for that TV controversy, ask fellow students what effect the programs seem to have on them, and maybe get a different interpretation by questioning their instructors. What people think and say is evidence, too; Marybeth Little argues that college males are egotistic and unrealistic in their attitude toward woman's role in marriage, and quotes a number of them ("Whether she likes it or not, her job is to be a homemaker.") in support of her contention.

As for *logical reasoning*, see how Jacques Barzun applies it to his defense of traditional examinations. The trick here is to look *behind* your opinion for a basic reason or assumption which makes you think as you do. Barzun, for example, believes that formal examinations are an important part of the educational process and should not be abolished. Why? Because "Examinations are not things that happen in school. They are a recurring feature of life, whether in the form of decisive interviews to pass, of important letters to write, or life-and-death diagnoses to make, or meetings to address, or girls to propose to." If Barzun can persuade you to accept this assumption, he can lead you, logically, to agree that "The habit of passing examinations is therefore one to acquire early" — i.e., in schools and colleges. (This is syllogistic reasoning, with the minor premise — that schools prepare students for life — taken for granted: Life includes examinations; schools prepare for life; therefore, schools should include examinations.)

You needn't be a philosopher to use a little logical reasoning in an opinion theme. Suppose you are writing that theme against TV. Along with your factual evidence from programs, interviews with fellow-students, etc., the thought may occur to you that you feel more refreshed, more alive, when you have taken part in a play, or a tennis match, yourself, rather than just watched one. You decide that the human mind is made to participate, to *act*, rather than to be acted upon. And therefore, if anyone spends too much time huddled before the silver screen — you finish it. This is logical reasoning, from an assumption to a conclusion about the subject in hand.

Or, you may remember having read that creative talent declined in Rome when great circus spectacles were emphasized, and you may cite that historical record to demonstrate what may happen if we have too much mechanical entertainment. In this case you will be reasoning on the basis of *historical example*. This is a favorite kind of reasoning in political articles. Barbara Ward, for

example, uses it in "Race Relations as a World Issue" in support of her thesis that education provides the best basis for "an unforced social equality." "In India," she points out, "men sent to study in British universities and admitted, after 1920, to full equality in the Indian civil service, learned to work with white colleagues on a basis of mutual respect." Her reasoning is: racial antipathy between Englishmen and Indians was overcome by their having a common educational background; therefore, racial antipathy between white and colored peoples anywhere in the world today can be overcome by the same means. (This is also called argument by *analogy*.)

Finally, *emotion*. When and how much should you use it, in arguing for an opinion? In her essay on the universal, yet personal, subject of marriage ("Marriage Is Belonging") Katherine Anne Porter appealed to her readers' emotions by dramatic quotations from Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning, by the use of words with strong emotional associations ("Marriage is . . . a *secret alliance*, a *mystical estate*. . ."), by rhythmical sentences with effective repetition ("The best, the very best, of all these relationships is that one in marriage between a man and a woman who are good lovers, good friends and good partners. . ."). Since Katherine Anne Porter's purpose in this essay is the statement of a personal belief, the eulogy or praise of marriage, we may say she is justified. If this is your primary purpose in, say, a theme stating a religious conviction, or one protesting a social injustice, you too may legitimately "let yourself go" a little.

But this package, in our Opinion stockroom, *emotion*, should be labeled "Handle With Care." Although direct appeal to the reader's emotions, especially at the beginning and end of a theme, is sometimes justified, it is usually better to express your feelings indirectly, through the terseness of your arguments, through emphatic, short sentences, through simple, sincere statements of your beliefs. Otherwise, when you imagine yourself soaring you may be only ranting. Note that Porter's "Marriage Is Belonging" also contains a good deal of humorous explanation ("When men at last discovered — who knows how? — that they were fathers . . ." etc.). Another writer might combine appeal to the emotions with logical reasoning, or statistics.

The techniques of the opinion article vary. Some of the pieces emphasize reasoning, some factual evidence, some emotion. You can try any or all of these approaches; and if you learn to argue, temperately but effectively, you not only may convert someone to your way of thinking, but, more important, you will clarify those convictions and make them more worth holding yourself,



## WAR AND PEACE

Bertrand Russell

### The Future of Mankind

*Bertrand Russell, British mathematician, philosopher, and essayist, has taught and lectured on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1950 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature "in recognition of his many-sided and significant authorship, in which he has constantly figured as a defender of humanity and freedom of thought." With Professor Whitehead, he is the author of a masterpiece of modern mathematics, Principia Mathematica (1910-13). Although a strong liberal and interested in socialism, Russell disliked the Soviet regime from the start because of its dogmatism. His clear thinking is reflected in his prose style, which has been praised for its "lucidity . . . and logic."*

Before the end of the present century, unless something quite unforeseeable occurs, one of three possibilities will have been realized. These three are:

- I. The end of human life, perhaps of all life on our planet.
- II. A reversion to barbarism after a catastrophic diminution of the population of the globe.
- III. A unification of the world under a single government, possessing a monopoly of all the major weapons of war.

I do not pretend to know which of these will happen, or even which is the most likely. What I do contend, without any hesitation, is that the kind of system to which we have been accustomed cannot possibly continue.

The first possibility, the extinction of the human race, is not to be expected in the next world war, unless that war is postponed for a longer time than now seems probable. But if the next world war is indecisive, or if the victors are unwise, and if organized states survive it, a period of feverish technical development may be expected to follow its conclusion. With vastly more powerful means of utilizing atomic energy than those now available, it is thought by many sober men of science that radio-active clouds, drifting round the world, may disintegrate living tissue everywhere. Although the last survivor may proclaim himself universal Emperor, his reign will be brief and his subjects will all be corpses. With his death the uneasy episode of life will end, and the peaceful rocks will revolve unchanged until the sun explodes.

Perhaps a disinterested spectator would consider this the most desirable consummation, in view of man's long record of folly and cruelty. But we, who

are actors in the drama, who are entangled in the net of private affections and public hopes, can hardly take this attitude with any sincerity. True, I have heard men say that they would prefer the end of man to submission to the Soviet government, and doubtless in Russia there are those who would say the same about submission to Western capitalism. But this is rhetoric with a bogus air of heroism. Although it must be regarded as unimaginative humbug, it is dangerous, because it makes men less energetic in seeking ways of avoiding the catastrophe that they pretend not to dread.

The second possibility, that of a reversion to barbarism, would leave open the likelihood of a gradual return to civilization, as after the fall of Rome. The sudden transition will, if it occurs, be infinitely painful to those who experience it, and for some centuries afterwards life will be hard and drab. But at any rate there will still be a future for mankind, and the possibility of rational hope.

I think such an outcome of a really scientific world war is by no means improbable. Imagine each side in a position to destroy the chief cities and centers of industry of the enemy; imagine an almost complete obliteration of laboratories and libraries, accompanied by a heavy casualty rate among men of science; imagine famine due to radio-active spray, and pestilence caused by bacteriological warfare: would social cohesion survive such strains? Would not prophets tell the maddened populations that their ills were wholly due to science, and that the extermination of all educated men would bring the millennium? Extreme hopes are born of extreme misery, and in such a world hopes could only be irrational. I think the great states to which we are accustomed would break up, and the sparse survivors would revert to a primitive village economy.

The third possibility, that of the establishment of a single government for the whole world, might be realized in various ways: by the victory of the United States in the next world war, or by the victory of the U.S.S.R., or, theoretically, by agreement. Or — and I think this is the most hopeful of the issues that are in any degree probable — by an alliance of the nations that desire an international government, becoming, in the end, so strong that Russia would no longer dare to stand out. This might conceivably be achieved without another world war, but it would require courageous and imaginative statesmanship in a number of countries.

There are various arguments that are used against the project of a single government of the whole world. The commonest is that the project is utopian and impossible. Those who use this argument, like most of those who advocate a world government, are thinking of a world government brought about by agreement. I think it is plain that the mutual suspicions between Russia and the West make it futile to hope, in any near future, for any genuine agreement. Any pretended universal authority to which both sides can agree, as things stand, is bound to be a sham, like U.N.O. Consider the difficulties that have been encountered in the much more modest project of an international control over

atomic energy, to which Russia will only consent if inspection is subject to the veto, and therefore a farce. I think we should admit that a world government will have to be imposed by force.

But — many people will say — why all this talk about a world government? Wars have occurred ever since men were organized into units larger than the family, but the human race has survived. Why should it not continue to survive even if wars go on occurring from time to time? Moreover, people like war, and will feel frustrated without it. And without war there will be no adequate opportunity for heroism or self-sacrifice.

This point of view — which is that of innumerable elderly gentlemen, including the rulers of Soviet Russia — fails to take account of modern technical possibilities. I think civilization could probably survive one more world war, provided it occurs fairly soon and does not last long. But if there is no slowing up in the rate of discovery and invention, and if great wars continue to recur, the destruction to be expected, even if it fails to exterminate the human race, is pretty certain to produce the kind of reversion to a primitive social system that I spoke of a moment ago. And this will entail such an enormous diminution of population, not only by war, but by subsequent starvation and disease, that the survivors are bound to be fierce and, at least for a considerable time, destitute of the qualities required for rebuilding civilization.

Nor is it reasonable to hope that, if nothing drastic is done, wars will nevertheless not occur. They always have occurred from time to time, and obviously will break out again sooner or later unless mankind adopt some system that makes them impossible. But the only such system is a single government with a monopoly of armed force.

If things are allowed to drift, it is obvious that the bickering between Russia and the Western democracies will continue until Russia has a considerable store of atomic bombs, and that when that time comes there will be an atomic war. In such a war, even if the worse consequences are avoided, Western Europe, including Great Britain, will be virtually exterminated. If America and the U.S.S.R. survive as organized states, they will presently fight again. If one side is victorious, it will rule the world, and a unitary government of mankind will have come into existence; if not, either mankind, or at least civilization, will perish. This is what must happen if nations and their rulers are lacking in constructive vision.

When I speak of “constructive vision,” I do not mean merely the theoretical realization that a world government is desirable. More than half the American nation, according to the Gallup poll, hold this opinion. But most of its advocates think of it as something to be established by friendly negotiation, and shrink from any suggestion of the use of force. In this I think they are mistaken. I am sure that force, or the threat of force, will be necessary. I hope the threat of force may suffice, but, if not, actual force should be employed.



Assuming a monopoly of armed force established by the victory of one side in a war between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., what sort of world will result?

In either case, it will be a world in which successful rebellion will be impossible. Although, of course, sporadic assassination will still be liable to occur, the concentration of all important weapons in the hands of the victors will make them irresistible, and there will therefore be secure peace. Even if the dominant nation is completely devoid of altruism, its leading inhabitants, at least, will achieve a very high level of material comfort, and will be freed from the tyranny of fear. They are likely, therefore, to become gradually more good-natured and less inclined to persecute. Like the Romans, they will, in the course of time, extend citizenship to the vanquished. There will then be a true world state, and it will be possible to forget that it will have owed its origin to conquest. Which of us, during the reign of Lloyd George, felt humiliated by the contrast with the days of Edward I?

A world empire of either the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. is therefore preferable to the results of a continuation of the present international anarchy.

There are, however, important reasons for preferring a victory of America. I am not contending that capitalism is better than Communism; I think it not impossible that, if America were Communist and Russia were capitalist, I should still be on the side of America. My reason for siding with America is that there is in that country more respect than in Russia for the things that I value in a civilized way of life. The things I have in mind are such as: freedom of thought, freedom of inquiry, freedom of discussion, and humane feeling. What a victory of Russia would mean is easily to be seen in Poland. There were flourishing universities in Poland, containing men of great intellectual eminence. Some of these men, fortunately, escaped; the rest disappeared. Education is now reduced to learning the formula of Stalinist orthodoxy; it is only open (beyond the elementary stage) to young people whose parents are politically irreproachable, and it does not aim at producing any mental faculty except that of glib repetition of correct shibboleths and quick apprehension of the side that is winning official favor. From such an educational system nothing of intellectual value can result.

Meanwhile the middle class was annihilated by mass deportations, first in 1940, and again after the expulsion of the Germans. Politicians of majority parties were liquidated, imprisoned, or compelled to fly. Betraying friends to the police, or perjury when they were brought to trial, are often the only means of survival for those who have incurred governmental suspicions.

I do not doubt that, if this régime continues for a generation, it will succeed in its objects. Polish hostility to Russia will die out, and be replaced by Communist orthodoxy. Science and philosophy, art and literature, will become sycophantic adjuncts of government, jejune, narrow, and stupid. No individual will think, or even feel, for himself, but each will be contentedly a mere unit in the mass. A victory of Russia would, in time, make such a mentality worldwide.

No doubt the complacency induced by success would ultimately lead to a relaxation of control, but the process would be slow, and the revival of respect for the individual would be doubtful. For such reasons I should view a Russian victory as an appalling disaster.

A victory by the United States would have far less drastic consequences. In the first place, it would not be a victory of the United States in isolation, but of an Alliance in which the other members would be able to insist upon retaining a large part of their traditional independence. One can hardly imagine the American army seizing the dons at Oxford and Cambridge and sending them to hard labor in Alaska. Nor do I think that they would accuse Mr. Attlee of plotting and compel him to fly to Moscow. Yet these are strict analogues to the things the Russians have done in Poland. After a victory of an Alliance led by the United States there would still be British culture, French culture, Italian culture, and (I hope) German culture; there would not, therefore, be the same dead uniformity as would result from Soviet domination.

There is another important difference, and that is that Moscow orthodoxy is much more all-pervasive than that of Washington. In America, if you are a geneticist, you may hold whatever view of Mendelism the evidence makes you regard as the most probable; in Russia, if you are a geneticist who disagrees with Lysenko, you are liable to disappear mysteriously. In America, you may write a book debunking Lincoln if you feel so disposed; in Russia, if you write a book debunking Lenin, it would not be published and you would be liquidated. If you are an American economist, you may hold, or not hold, that America is heading for a slump; in Russia, no economist dare question that an American slump is imminent. In America, if you are a professor of philosophy, you may be an idealist, a materialist, a pragmatist, a logical positivist, or whatever else may take your fancy; at congresses you can argue with men whose opinions differ from yours, and listeners can form a judgment as to who has the best of it. In Russia you must be a dialectical materialist, but at one time the element of materialism outweighs the element of dialectic, and at other times it is the other way round. If you fail to follow the developments of official metaphysics with sufficient nimbleness, it will be the worse for you. Stalin at all times knows the truth about metaphysics, but you must not suppose that the truth this year is the same as it was last year.

In such a world intellect must stagnate, and even technological progress must soon come to an end.

Liberty, of the sort that Communists despise, is important not only to intellectuals or to the more fortunate sections of society. Owing to its absence in Russia, the Soviet government has been able to establish a greater degree of economic inequality than exists in Great Britain, or even in America. An oligarchy which controls all the means of publicity can perpetrate injustices and cruelties which would be scarcely possible if they were widely known. Only

democracy and free publicity can prevent the holders of power from establishing a servile state, with luxury for the few and overworked poverty for the many. This is what is being done by the Soviet government wherever it is in secure control. There are, of course, economic inequalities everywhere, but in a democratic régime they tend to diminish, whereas under an oligarchy they tend to increase. And wherever an oligarchy has power, economic inequalities threaten to become permanent owing to the modern impossibility of successful rebellion.

I come now to the question: what should be our policy, in view of the various dangers to which mankind is exposed? To summarize the above arguments: We have to guard against three dangers: (1) the extinction of the human race; (2) a reversion to barbarism; (3) the establishment of a universal slave state, involving misery for the vast majority, and the disappearance of all progress in knowledge and thought. Either the first or second of these disasters is almost certain unless great wars can soon be brought to an end. Great wars can only be brought to an end by the concentration of armed force under a single authority. Such a concentration cannot be brought about by agreement, because of the opposition of Soviet Russia, but it must be brought about somehow.

The first step — and it is one which is now not very difficult — is to persuade the United States and the British Commonwealth of the absolute necessity for a military unification of the world. The governments of the English-speaking nations should then offer to all other nations the option of entering into a firm Alliance, involving a pooling of military resources and mutual defense against aggression. In the case of hesitant nations, such as Italy, great inducements, economic and military, should be held out to produce their co-operation.

At a certain stage, when the Alliance had acquired sufficient strength, any Great Power still refusing to join should be threatened with outlawry, and, if recalcitrant, should be regarded as a public enemy. The resulting war, if it occurred fairly soon, would probably leave the economic and political structure of the United States intact, and would enable the victorious Alliance to establish a monopoly of armed force, and therefore to make peace secure. But perhaps, if the Alliance were sufficiently powerful, war would not be necessary, and the reluctant Powers would prefer to enter it as equals rather than, after a terrible war, submit to it as vanquished enemies. If this were to happen, the world might emerge from its present dangers without another great war. I do not see any hope of such a happy issue by any other method. But whether Russia would yield when threatened with war is a question as to which I do not venture an opinion.

I have been dealing mainly with the gloomy aspects of the present situation of mankind. It is necessary to do so, in order to persuade the world to adopt measures running counter to traditional habits of thought and ingrained prejudices. But beyond the difficulties and probable tragedies of the near future there is the possibility of immeasurable good, and of greater well-being than has ever before fallen to the lot of man. This is not merely a possibility, but, if the Western

democracies are firm and prompt, a probability. From the break-up of the Roman Empire to the present day, states have almost continuously increased in size. There are now only two fully independent states, America and Russia. The next step in this long historical process should reduce the two to one, and thus put an end to the period of organized wars, which began in Egypt some 6,000 years ago. If war can be prevented without the establishment of a grinding tyranny, a weight will be lifted from the human spirit, deep collective fears will be exorcised, and as fear diminishes we may hope that cruelty also will grow less.

The uses to which men have put their increased control over natural forces are curious. In the nineteenth century they devoted themselves chiefly to increasing the numbers of *homo sapiens*, particularly of the white variety. In the twentieth century they have, so far, pursued the exactly opposite aim. Owing to the increased productivity of labor, it has become possible to devote a larger percentage of the population to war. If atomic energy were to make production easier, the only effect, as things are, would be to make wars worse, since fewer people would be needed for producing necessities. Unless we can cope with the problem of abolishing war, there is no reason whatever to rejoice in labor-saving technique, but quite the reverse. On the other hand, if the danger of war were removed, scientific technique could at last be used to promote human happiness. There is no longer any technical reason for the persistence of poverty, even in such densely populated countries as India and China. If war no longer occupied men's thoughts and energies, we could, within a generation, put an end to all serious poverty throughout the world.

I have spoken of liberty as a good, but it is not an absolute good. We all recognize the need to restrain murderers, and it is even more important to restrain murderous states. Liberty must be limited by law, and its most valuable forms can only exist within a framework of law. What the world most needs is effective laws to control international relations. The first and most difficult step in the creation of such law is the establishment of adequate sanctions, and this is only possible through the creation of a single armed force in control of the whole world. But such an armed force, like a municipal police force, is not an end in itself; it is a means to the growth of a social system governed by law, where force is not the prerogative of private individuals or nations, but is exercised only by a neutral authority in accordance with rules laid down in advance. There is hope that law, rather than private force, may come to govern the relations of nations within the present century. If this hope is not realized we face utter disaster; if it is realized, the world will be far better than at any previous period in the history of man.

## QUESTIONS

1. What are the alternatives for the future, according to Russell? Can you think of any others?
2. How could a "reversion to barbarism" come about? Do you see any signs of such a reversion today?
3. Why would Russell rather be ruled by an American victor than a Russian victor?
4. Could an effective world government be established without a war?
5. How does Russell outline his article? List "organizing" paragraphs and sentences.
6. In what other ways does he achieve clearness?

George F. Kennan

## Realities of American Foreign Policy

*George F. Kennan, career diplomat, had special opportunities to study communism from the time he assisted Ambassador Bullitt to reopen U.S. relations with Moscow in 1933 until his own service as Ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1952. In 1946 he forwarded urgent warnings to Washington of Stalin's aggressive intentions; in 1947 he was placed in charge of the State Department's policy-planning staff for Europe and carried out a "policy of containment" of communism which he had first proposed in an anonymous article (by "X") published in Foreign Affairs. His 1954 lectures at his alma mater, Princeton, on the "Realities of American Foreign Policy" were praised for their "wisdom, balance, and penetration."*

I am afraid that in the last two of these lectures I found it necessary to speak primarily about things we ought not to do rather than about things we *ought* to do in our foreign relations. I hope tonight to correct in some measure the resulting deficiency and to indicate to you certain of what seem to me to be the more hopeful and constructive possibilities of American foreign policy. But before I enter on this task, there are one or two things I would like to add, by way of afterthought, to what I said last night with regard to the problem of Soviet power. I am afraid that if I do not do this there will be certain serious gaps in the pattern of the Soviet problem I left in your minds.

You will recall that I hinted at the possibility that the changes in the Soviet order which we would like to see occur — above all, the retraction of the limits of Soviet power and influence to something more normal and more compatible

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with the peace of the world — might conceivably come as the result of the workings of internal forces within the structure of Soviet power, with only an indirect encouragement from ourselves and the rest of the outside world. I know that this intimation will be challenged by some people who do not believe in the possibility of such change, or who fear that it will not occur soon enough to be of any significance to us. It is about this attitude that I would like to say a few words.

It seems to me that in the field of international affairs one should never be so sure of his analysis of the future as to permit it to become a source of complete despair. The greatest law of human history is its unpredictability. Here, in this Soviet problem, we have the greatest possible need for the broad historical perspective. There has never been a country that was not susceptible to change. Evolution occurs everywhere, if only as a response to change in physical conditions — alterations in populations and resources and technology. Does anyone really suppose that a nation could undergo so violent a process of technological change as has marked the Soviet Union in these past decades and yet remain unaffected in its social and political life? Or is it held that the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 brought into being a political system so far-sighted, so comprehensive, so well-designed, that it can bear without modification, indefinitely, the weight of any conceivable degree of physical and technological change? It would be an ill omen for us all if we were obliged to admit this. For certainly, only a political system magnificently attuned to the inner needs of man could meet this supreme test.

Actually, history has already belied this fear. There has already been change in the Soviet orbit. There was a great change from Leninism to Stalinism. There is a change in process today from Stalinism to something else; and the fact that this "something else" is not fully clear to us is not a proof that it does not exist, or that it will not be something closer to the requirements of international stability than what we have known hitherto in the Soviet system. It is my impression that there must already be in progress, in the relations between Moscow and the various satellite governments, a certain subtle evolution, the effects of which may as yet be in no way visible, but which may nevertheless be of greatest importance for the development of the Soviet program as a whole.

If there is any great lesson we Americans need to learn with regard to the methodology of foreign policy, it is that we must be gardeners and not mechanics in our approach to world affairs. We must come to think of the development of international life as an organic and not a mechanical process. We must realize that we did not create the forces by which this process operates. We must learn to take these forces for what they are and to induce them to work with us and for us by influencing the environmental stimuli to which they are subjected, but to do this gently and patiently, with understanding and sympathy, not trying to force growth by mechanical means, not tearing the plants up by the roots when

they fail to behave as we wish them to. The forces of nature will generally be on the side of him who understands them best and respects them most scrupulously. We do not need to insist, as the communists do, that change in the camp of *our* adversaries can come only by violence. Our concept of the possibility of improvement in the condition of mankind is not predicated, as is that of the communists, on the employment of violence as a means to its realization. If our outlook on life is, as we believe it to be, more closely attuned to the real nature of man than that of our communist adversaries, then we can afford to be patient and even occasionally to suffer reverses, placing our confidence in the longer and deeper workings of history.

I would also like to add a few words of reinforcement to what I said at the conclusion of last night's lecture about the effects on the Soviet orbit of our own behavior here at home and in our relations generally with the non-communist countries. There seems to be an assumption among some of our people that the Russian communists and their people take note of us only when we do something that affects them directly. I would like to warn strongly against this assumption. Don't think that we are not watched at all times with most careful and anxious eyes from the other side of the Iron Curtain. Don't think that the resulting observations do not have the most far-reaching repercussions on the hopes and fears and calculations both of the rulers and the ruled in the Soviet camp, and consequently on the entire trend of the political relationship between them. When we make fools of ourselves and mess up our own affairs and bring dismay and anxiety into the hearts of those who would like to be our friends and our allies, this is reflected at once by a new birth of false hopes and arrogance in the minds of those who rule the roost in Moscow. When, on the other hand, we speak with a voice — or better, act with a voice — that carries courage and determination and inner conviction to the world at large, believe me, it is heard by millions and millions of people, and every heart that cares anything for freedom thrills to it, and those who hear it do not ask by what precise military calculations we propose to bring Soviet power to an end or on what day this is supposed to happen. They are wiser than many of us in this respect; and they know that just because one cannot predict the precise steps by which courage and faith earn their victories in this world, the power of these qualities is nonetheless formidable for that fact.

Finally, while I am still dealing in after-thoughts, I would like to say a few words about the particular problem we have in those specific areas that are today most threatened by indigenous communist pressures; for it is there that the attention of our people and the world is riveted just at this moment, and I fear that any presentation that did not contain a specific reference to them would be incomplete.

So far as Indo-China itself is concerned, which is eighty percent of the problem today in the immediate sense, I think there is little to be gained at this

moment by any attempt to master-mind our government's actions, day by day, from the outside. This is an incredibly complex and baffling situation. We are now in it up to the hilt. The time has passed when any back seat driving can do any good. Our government is obviously making a concentrated and determined effort to come to grips with the problem. We can only wish them well and give them our confidence and support. There are times when, having elected a government, we will be best advised to let it govern and to let it speak for us as it will in the councils of the nations.

But there are a few considerations with regard to the general problem of communism in Asia which might be worth noting at this point. It is here, above all, that we must avoid the fallacy that we are dealing with some threat of military aggression comparable to that which faced the world when Hitler put his demands on the Poles in 1939. Military aggression can never be ruled out entirely as a possibility, but it is not the most urgent and likely of the possibilities with which we have to reckon. We are dealing here in large measure with tendencies and states of mind which, however misguided and however befuddled by deceptions practiced from outside, are nevertheless basically the reflections of wholly real and even profound indigenous conditions, and would not be caused to disappear even in the unthinkable event that Moscow could be threatened or bludgeoned into telling them to do so. We are dealing here with great emotional forces, and not with rational reactions.

We could perhaps exploit these forces with relative ease, as the communists do, if we had the cynicism and the shamelessness and the heartlessness to do it. We, too, could promise men things we know to be illusory. We, too, could hold out short-term advantages as baits for long-term enslavement. We, too, could incite hatreds and fan suspicions and try to strike profit from the workings of bitterness and blind fury.

But we Americans are not set up for this type of exploitation, either morally or politically. This being the case, there are limits to what we can expect to accomplish; and I would be foolish to encourage you to believe that there are any simple or sure solutions to these baffling problems. There is no certain means by which other people can be prevented from following the Pied Piper to their destruction if their childishness and lack of realism are of this extraordinary order.

Some of these troublesome situations have existed for a long time. I can conceive that they may have to exist for a long time still. We would do well to remind ourselves here, again, that just because the solutions of problems are not visible at any particular time does not mean that those problems will never be alleviated or confined to tolerable dimensions. History has a way of changing the very terms in which problems operate and of leaving them, in the end, unsolved to be sure, yet strangely deflated of their original meaning and their importance.



I do not mean to say that we have no possibilities at all for influencing the situation in these uncertain areas, or that we should not make the effort. But I would like to point out that this does not mean many of the things that Americans seem to think it means. It does not mean that we should breathe down the necks of these peoples and smother them with our influence and attention. It does not mean that we should give them the impression that they have to choose between the Russians and ourselves. It does not mean that we should deluge them with words and with great numbers of American officials and visitors. None of these things is necessarily useful; all of them can, on occasion, be harmful.

We must remember that many people in these countries have, for various reasons, a pathological fear of what they have come to think of as being dominated by the United States. If they are told that they have to choose between the Russians and ourselves, this fills them only with frustration and despair, and paralyzes whatever action they might otherwise be capable of in their own interests. Our propaganda often fails to carry to them because their problems are deep and painful and highly personal, and sometimes there is really nothing we can say to them about themselves, or very little, that comes with tact and good grace from a nation so wealthy and successful as our own. The presence of American officials in large numbers is not always useful, because people in general, and Americans in particular, do not always appear at their best when transplanted to a foreign environment. And the material comforts to which most Americans have become accustomed and to which they cling so tenaciously even when they live abroad, have a tendency to invite envy and contempt rather than admiration when they are sported in the midst of people who do not themselves enjoy them.

Instead of all these things, and instead of the attempt to appear eager for intimacy and full of helpful suggestions, I think it would be better, as things stand today, if we were to display toward the peoples of these unsettled areas an American personality marked by a very special reserve and dignity, fully prepared to admit that we probably do not have all the answers to their problems, not necessarily demanding that the values of our own civilization should be fully understood and appreciated by others, prepared to recognize the experimental and tentative nature of our own national institutions, requiring of others not that we be liked, or imitated, or admired, but only that we be respected for our seriousness of purpose, our belief in ourselves, and the fundamental reasonableness of our approach. I would hope that there might come a time, as I shall have occasion to explain later this evening, when we would have more than this to say to peoples in Asia and elsewhere. But as things stand today, and as Americans *are* today, I think we should do well to lay this sort of restraint upon ourselves.

So much for the after-thoughts. Now for the burden of what I should like to say by way of conclusion.

It seems to me evident, from the considerations that have been set forth in the preceding lectures, that in no area of our foreign policy will we be well served, in this coming period, by an approach directed strictly to countering the Soviet threat as a straight military problem. This consideration is valid not only for our relations with the non-communist countries, whose people obviously expect other and more positive things from us; it is also valid from the standpoint of our approach to the communist problem itself in its broader aspects.

Let us remember that the dominant characteristic of our present international situation is the passing of the phenomenon people have called "bipolarity" — a state of affairs that marked the immediate post-hostilities period — and the rise to renewed vigor and importance of the so-called "in-between" countries, particularly our recent enemies, but not only them. We are today in the midst of a transition from a simple to a complex international pattern. Yet many of us seem not to be aware of this.

The test of statesmanship for both the Russians and ourselves in the coming period is going to be the skill with which we are able to adjust to this new situation, and the vision and imagination with which we succeed in shaping new and advantageous relations with the in-between countries, to replace those that have rested, since the recent war, on the abnormal conditions of political subjection in the Russian case, and economic dependence in our own. Here, in application to this new task, a strictly military approach, which attempts to subordinate all other considerations to the balancing of the military equation, will be not only inadequate but downright harmful. For the demands placed on our policy by the rise of these in-between countries to positions of new vitality and importance will often be in direct conflict with the requirements of the perfect and total military posture; and any marked failure on our part to meet these new demands will only be capitalized on at once by the communists within the respective countries; so that by a rigid military approach we will be in danger of losing on the political level more than we gain on the military one. We will be like the man whose exclusive preoccupation with barricading the front door has made it easy for his enemies to enter by the back door.

Now what the in-between countries are looking to us for is not to be taught how to combat communism — however much we may think they need to learn about it — but rather for positive and imaginative suggestions as to how the peaceful future of the world might be shaped and how our own vast economic strength in particular might be so adjusted to the lives of other peoples as to permit a fruitful and mutually profitable interchange, without leading to relationships of political dependence and coercion. But it is not only the more conspicuous of the in-between countries who are looking to us for this; it is all the non-communist countries, in fact, and even all the subject peoples within the communist orbit, who know that their chances of liberation will be best if we

Americans are able to develop positive and constructive purposes that serve to place the negative, destructive purposes of communism in the shadows where they belong.

In the larger sense, therefore, it may be said that the problem of world communism is one of those problems which can be dealt with effectively only if you learn to look away from it, not in the sense that you take no precautionary measures with regard to it, but in the sense that you do not permit it to pre-occupy your thoughts and your vision but rather insist on the right to proceed with your positive undertakings in spite of it. This is a quality not peculiar to Moscow's communism. Only too often in life we find ourselves beset by demons, sometimes outside ourselves, sometimes within us, who have power over us only so long as they are able to monopolize our attention and lose that power when we refuse to permit ourselves to be diverted and intimidated by them and when we simply go on with the real work we know we have to do. Thus it is with communism; and in this recognition lies, I believe, not only the key to the only successful method of dealing with that particular phenomenon but also the key to a successful global approach to our world problems generally, in this coming period.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Explain "we must be gardeners and not mechanics in our approach to world affairs."
2. What is the probable result of urging neutral nations to choose between the United States and Russia?
3. What do the neutral nations look to us for?
4. Explain "world communism is one of those problems which can be dealt with effectively only if you learn to look away from it."

Barbara Ward

## Race Relations as a World Issue

*Barbara Ward (Mrs. R. G. A. Jackson), an editor of the London Economist and writer on international social and economic problems, "speaks for all thoughtful people in Western Europe and America who are troubled by the anomalies between Western ideals and Western practices." She was educated at an English convent school, the Sorbonne, and Oxford, and has received honorary degrees from Fordham, Smith, and Columbia. Her three chief books (The West at Bay, 1948; Policy for the West, 1951; Faith and Freedom, 1954) form a trilogy with, as argument, "the defense and justification of Western civilization and its values."*

In the second passionate parliamentary debate on the British Government action in Egypt, James Griffiths, deputy leader of the Labor party, warned the Commons that one of the consequences of Anglo-French intervention would be to exacerbate race relations between East and West. The British, he said, would be pictured as white imperialists wantonly attacking a small colored people.

The Soviet Union has shown similar assessment of the crisis. It has appealed to the Bandung powers, the group of Asian and African states which met in a conference in 1955, to reconvene — an invitation that obviously seeks to underline the racial difference between the Egyptians as a colored people of Africa, and France and Britain as "white aggressors."

No doubt this implication of the Suez crisis may seem a little remote among all the immediate violence and risk that resulted from Anglo-French intervention. Yet in this troubled century, problems which had seemed marginal have an uncanny way of moving suddenly to the center of the stage of history. At present, the world-wide problem of race relations may not seem as acute as communism (which exploits racialism) or nationalism (which often fuses with it) but the Egyptian conflict may well give it another jolt toward the heart of the maelstrom. Of all the long-term world-wide implications of Suez, this may be the most fateful.

At present, most Westerners think of the race problem as being primarily one of whether men and women of African stock — in Africa or the United States — can achieve full equality of status. But this definition is probably already outdated. The question is no longer whether Africans can achieve equality. It is becoming the wider query whether men and women of white color shall lose it. There is no certainty that mankind will, after three hundred years of white dominance, move safely to race equality.

As anyone who has recently spent any length of time in Africa and Asia can

From *New York Times Magazine*, November 11, 1956. By permission of the author and the publishers.

testify, there have been three prevalent attitudes toward the white man. There has been, first of all, an uncritical acceptance of the white man at his own valuation and of white skin as a natural superiority. Europeans of liberal outlook in Africa have sometimes been surprised and shocked by their African servants' resistance to the entertainment of Africans in the house. Gloom descends on the kitchen. Dinner is served with less than usual efficiency. The steward will even demand inferior whisky to offer to non-white guests. "Master, you no give dat black man good whisky" — "dat black man" being a graduate of Cambridge and a barrister of the Middle Temple.

All over primitive Africa black men watched the coming of the white man with an awed and innocent eye and expected a new heaven and a new earth from his religion, his skills, his magic, his confidence and his power. Then the title "*Bwana*" — master — was not demanded. It was given freely and with hope.

Nor was this acceptance of the white man as inherently superior unknown in Asia. In spite of its ancient splendors and <sup>1000 years</sup> millennial philosophy, India in the nineteenth century contained many men who accepted without question the superiority of all things Western. Rising Arab nationalism in the nineteenth century looked to Western influence as a liberating force. To this day, in Malaya, some Chinese residents among the so-called "Queen's Chinese" still tend to regard the white man's standards, outlook and company as naturally superior.

Today, in some parts of Africa and among many groups in Asia, this early unsophisticated acceptance of white superiority has given way to more rational and self-respecting standards of judgment. In West Africa, for instance, where, thanks to the courage and devotion of a century of missionary effort, modern education has been available to some African families for over a hundred years, it is possible for the educated African and European to meet on a basis of unforced social equality and to experience a meeting of minds molded in comparable traditions.

In India, men sent to study in British universities and admitted, after 1920, to full equality in the Indian civil service, learned to work with white colleagues on a basis of mutual respect. Few Indians achieved this balance without being ready, with great generosity of spirit, to overlook some insult offered by the crude, rude white racialism of some intolerant British memsahib. But since 1947 there has been a real sense of personal partnership within the Commonwealth.

Even in the troubled Arab world, French education in such countries as Tunisia produced Arab leaders who until these last tragic events, were ready to work with France on a basis of equality. And between Englishmen such as Glubb Pasha and the late King Abdullah of Jordan, equality of feeling reached virtually a sense of blood brotherhood.

Yet the common denominator of this sense of equality and possible partnership wherever it has appeared in Asia or Africa tends to be education. For the mass of people, once the almost magical acceptance of white superiority had

faded, the easiest emotion to excite is the opposite one — a xenophobic racialism, an irrational hatred of the white skin, an instinctive prejudice against all things Western.

In every recent crisis between Asia and the West, the area of dispute has been enlarged to cover racial antipathy. The Chinese Communists, drumming up anti-American feeling during the Korean crisis, denounced the Americans not only as imperialists and capitalists but also in traditional terms of Chinese xenophobia — as “red devils” or “red barbarians.”

Colonel Nasser accompanied the mounting Suez crisis with ever more violent broadcasts to all his Arab and African neighbors — as far to the south as Mombasa or Dar es Salaam — urging them to throw out the white man. The effect of open conflict will be the exploitation of these latent racial antipathies to the full by the Arabs. Xenophobia must grow; the sense of possible partnership must be driven underground.

At present, the three ways of looking at white-skinned peoples — veneration, equality, hatred — can still be found in Asia and Africa. Attitudes are still fluid, although they are changing with revolutionary speed. There is still time in which to work for peaceful and creative relationships. But there is not much time. And the danger is that the Suez crisis, undoing so much of the intangible work of trust and confidence accomplished between East and West since the war, will cut down the time limit still further.

In the first place, any unforced acceptance of white superiority is fading fast. The educated African or Asian admit that their communities need development and modernization and that help in the process must come from the West. But these facts do not support racial theories of superiority.

Every invention upon which European ascendancy has been based came originally to Europe from the Middle East — the alphabet, ore smelting, the ship, the wheel, agriculture, mathematics, chemistry. The great techniques of civilization which Europeans further developed and carried around the world came to them from outside — and incidentally the Arabs, who were often the means of transmission of these techniques to Europe, had views on the Europeans of the tenth century closely resembling some Europeans' views on Africans today. They found them dirty, backward, gross, clumsy.

In local contacts, today, the influence of the devoted Western civil servant or missionary or doctor is counteracted all too often by the low cultural level, the banality and lack of education of some Western business and commercial groups. The white man, seen close to, is sometimes impressive, sometimes not. And he is not a god.

But if he tries to maintain the old supremacy when the African's eye of innocence has been darkened, then his very effort makes him not only less divine but in the end less than human. Supremacy can be decent when it rests on consent. When consent vanishes, it can maintain itself only by increasing brutality

and with each new brutality its moral influence collapses further. That is the dilemma of the Boer in South Africa. Every year there are fewer "good niggers" who accept subservience. It is the dilemma of the French "colon" in Algeria. The Arabs no longer tolerate his dominance. The only alternatives are to move toward equality or to sink into violence and blood.

What, then, are the chances for world-wide race relations based upon equality and respect? In Asia, since the war, they had seemed to be improving. Direct Western colonial control has virtually ceased, but Asian politicians, civil servants, officers, business men, academic leaders, in short, the middle-class, brought into being by the evolution of society under Western rule, still think sufficiently in Western terms and accept Western values to a degree that makes a meeting of minds possible and fruitful.

These could be decades of vast opportunity for the West in Asia. The sympathy for the West felt by many of the newly enfranchised Asian leaders is an entry point for Western help and support. When it is given in direct human terms, without overtones of patronage or condescension, it not only confirms old friendships but establishes contact with the next generation of Asian leaders and administrators.

But there are shadows over the prospects in Asia. The first is the enormous repercussions throughout Asia and Africa — via all the media of propaganda — of such actions as the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt. Another is Western failure to realize that neither time nor drift nor *laissez-faire* is on the side of the West.

Present Asian leaders may perhaps have another decade of influence. Thereafter, new men, more and more the product of purely Asian environment and education, will take their places. Unless in these crucial years, the Western nations establish new contacts on a sufficient scale, there is no guarantee that the future mood in Asia will be liberal or well disposed to other races.

The bitterness of nationalist disputes *inside* India today shows what fires are there waiting to be stoked. Generous Western help to Asian economic growth, the provision of Western experts and technicians on a sufficient scale, their maintenance in Asia for long enough to establish friendship and influence, wider educational opportunities for Asians in the West — these are pre-conditions of a new and better East-West relationship. Today, one can only say that there is no sign of such policies being pursued on a sufficient scale or with sufficient energy and purpose.

And perhaps the darkest shadow is the fact that racial failure elsewhere may so exacerbate anti-Western feeling in Asia that no policies there, however generous, can check outraged rejection of all contact with the white man. It is not by coincidence that much of Colonel Nasser's most bitter anti-Western propaganda has been directed to Africans, not Asians. Unhappily, the dilemmas facing the white man in Africa are far more acute than any in Asia.

The bulk of Africans belong to a different level of civilization, and wherever differences in color and standards coincide the strains grow worse. For modern Anglo-Saxon man the dilemma is made more acute by the introduction of universal franchise. Where he is outnumbered or even equaled by Africans of different standards, he fears to be governed by an alien mass. For this reason, many people in Africa wish to experiment with franchises weighted in favor of education and property for the next decades and, in one area, the Belgian Congo, the knot has been cut by enfranchising neither white man nor black.

The test of sincerity in these mixed communities is the readiness of the white man, who today controls the resources and the positions of power, to use all his energy, skill and resources to insure that the low standards of his black neighbors are so raised that they can exercise the franchise responsibly hereafter. Education is the test. Where it goes forward rapidly, the African has hope and therefore patience. Both die where, as in South Africa, the white man uses African inferiority as the excuse to debar him from his place in society and then arranges society in such a way that his inferiority must continue.

The reason, incidentally, why the integration of schooling in the American South has become such a focus of worldwide interest is that schooling is universally felt to be the great avenue to equality and the test whereby communities demonstrate the way in which they are headed. Unhappily, in many parts of Africa, by this supreme test, the white man seems to be heading toward failure and so ultimately toward his own ruin.

And not only his own ruin, for the shadows he casts on his little local scene stretch across oceans and continents. The two leading nations of world communism are not troubled by the racial issue. China is "colored" (in our old-fashioned Western use of the word). Russia has large Asiatic populations with whom Russians freely mix. They are therefore free in all their propaganda and diplomatic activity to whip up and exploit latent Asian and African resentment against the white man and his centuries of domination.

The racial clashes in Sophiatown, Johannesburg — or Clinton, Tenn. — are more than a news story in the local press. The French-Arab conflict in North Africa and the "white" attack upon Arab peoples in Egypt make up more than a Middle East crisis. They are fuel for Communist propaganda in Asia and Africa. This propaganda paints a picture of the white man as the inexorable exploiter of men and women of Asian, Arab or African stock, as an unrepentant racist and finally as an outsider with whom no relations are possible save those of violence and rejection.

That day is not reached yet. And some Westerners may argue that, for a strong, self-confident Atlantic world, it does not matter too much if it ever is. But the consequences of a world organized on an anti-white basis are not so easily dismissed.

White men are outnumbered in the world by three to one and the dispro-



portion is increasing. In all international organizations they would be outvoted and outmaneuvered. Their repulse by Asian nationalism would leave Asia's millions wide open to Communist infiltration. All growth of Western commerce would be checked. Present trading interests and investments would be in jeopardy. The white man's position in Africa would become untenable. And, as white influence receded, that of Russia and China would inexorably grow.

Above all, any hope of a cooperative world order, based on racial equality — the kind of world order which liberal opinion in the West sets as its ultimate goal — would be blocked by massive, relentless, irrational anti-white prejudice. This outcome is not yet certain or necessary. Western imagination and generosity can check what drift and indifference are tending to create.

But with each year lost, the potentially explosive force of anti-Western feeling is growing. Like so many other crises in the post-war world — from China to Suez — the tempo is growing faster. And perhaps there is none where a reversal of direction is so greatly needed or, alas, so casually sought.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What was the Suez crisis? What political capital did the Soviet Union make of it?
2. What is the "common denominator" of equality and possible partnership between the races? Give an illustration of the working of this "common denominator."
3. Define *xenophobia*. How was it displayed in the Korean War?
4. What are the three attitudes of the colored races toward white-skinned people? Which of the three gives hope of future world peace?
5. What solution would you suggest to the problem of race relations as a world issue?

Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr.

## The U.N. — Illusions and Realities

*Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., grandson of the Henry Cabot Lodge who opposed Woodrow Wilson's plan for American participation in the League of Nations, considers the United Nations America's "best hope" for peace. A political writer for the conservative New York Herald Tribune in the Nineteen Thirties, and Republican Senator from Massachusetts 1936-44, 1946-52, he became a fervent internationalist as a result of changed conditions and his experiences in World War II. To fight in World War II, he resigned from the Senate; he earned the Bronze Star and Legion of Merit awards. During 1952 he managed Eisenhower's campaign for the Republican Presidential nomination, in 1953 he was appointed U.S. Representative to the United Nations and U.S. Representative in the Security Council.*

For the first time since the Korean war, the United Nations has been plunged into a crisis which has tested its very right to exist; in fact, this is a double crisis, in which the organization confronts the Soviet blood bath in Hungary and the events in Egypt at one and the same time.

As this is written, the situation is still full of explosive possibilities but, at least, an important turn away from war has been taken. In its day-and-night crisis sessions, the U.N. has taken a series of steps, rapid and to the point, aimed to end the attacks on Egypt, and to secure that area against an increasingly serious course of events. This is not, of course, the end of U.N. action. The situation remains full of danger and constant vigilance in the U.N. will be necessary.

Simultaneously, up to the limits of peaceful action, we have sought to keep faith with the heroes of Hungary, whose tragic sacrifice has so wrung our hearts. The U.N. has exposed to the glare of world condemnation the ghastly slaughter of Hungarians by Soviet armed might and this exposure has added to the woes of communism in many free nations.

From these momentous days, several impressions stand out clearly:

(1) As in Korea, the U.N.'s success in a real crisis has depended not only on its effectiveness as a loud-speaker to mobilize and focus world opinion but, even more, on the willingness of member nations to step forward and contribute — in money, relief supplies, even troops — and to share danger when the going gets rough. There has been more than a little midnight courage shown in these U.N. debates and, in the last analysis, nothing else could have availed.

(2) Support by small nations the world over for the United States' course in the U.N. has never been higher than in these debates. As Ambassador Palamas

of Greece said to the General Assembly, "The United States may feel that it is isolated in its idealistic and honest attitude. In fact, it is not. All the small and law-abiding countries of the world are standing by its side."

(3) In its first test, the six-year-old "Uniting for Peace" machinery — by which any seven members of the Security Council can call the General Assembly into emergency session whenever the Security Council has been frustrated by a veto — has proved sound and effective.

(4) Never in my nearly four years at the U.N. have broad American public support and encouragement for our U.N. efforts been so high, or the prayers and good wishes as shown in letters and telegrams been so heart-warming. An American public, once quite skeptical of the U.N. but in recent years more and more ready to accept it as a realistic device for peace, now seems instinctively to expect it to act worthily in a crisis.

To turn now from the immediate crisis to a more over-all view of the U.N., it should be set down that illusions about the U.N. still persist. It is natural that this should be so. Some illusions are found among old-fashioned foes of the U.N.; others, ironically, among its devoted admirers. The most prevalent seem to be these:

(1) *The "magic" United Nations.* Some comments about the U.N. convey the impression that it can do anything — that it is a sovereign remedy for all disputes and injustices. By this theory, a resolution of the Security Council or the General Assembly has magical properties so irresistible that no sooner is some evil practice condemned than the practice will vanish.

This comfortable theory is disproved in the records of the U.N. itself. When Moscow starts to murder Hungarian patriots, U.N. condemnation can force the murderer to pay a staggering price in world esteem — but it cannot automatically end the blood-letting, although we can have hopes of eventually accomplishing something along that line. In years past, the U.N. has sought to bring about, thus far without success, the end of race discrimination in South Africa; free passage for Israel through the Suez Canal; free election in East Germany; universal abolition of forced labor; the reunification of Korea in freedom, and a number of other goals.

History may one day show that the U.N.'s influence, combined with wise national policies, contributed to progress on all or most of these problems. Equally possibly, it may prove to have made some of them worse. To use the U.N. properly requires skill in timing and in judging the strength of opposing forces. It is a human contrivance, not a political miracle, and it is no more effective than its sovereign members make it.

(2) *The United Nations and world government.* A small minority of Americans hope — and an equally small minority fear — that the U.N. is, or will soon evolve into, a world government. It is, of course, nothing of the sort. It has none of the attributes of government: it cannot draft a soldier, levy a tax, or enact a

law. It cannot order any nation's troops into action against that nation's will. (Contrary to a superstition which still survives, the U.N. did *not* get us into the Korean war; rather, we sought and obtained U.N. backing to help us defend Korea.) The executive power of its chief officer, the Secretary General, is limited to the 3,000 international civil servants who work in the Secretariat, plus whatever observation teams, truce supervisors, or military contingents the member states place at his disposal for clearly specified purposes. His importance stems from his role as the instructed agent of the Security Council and the General Assembly, plus — in Mr. Hammarskjöld's case — his proven skill in diplomacy.

As for the future, a world government which free men could accept is as far off as a world-wide common sense of justice — without which world government would be world tyranny. The headlines from Budapest and Cairo are proof enough of how far we are from such a universal standard today. Meanwhile the U.N., whose motive power comes from sovereign states, can no more “evolve” into a world government than a team of horses can evolve into a locomotive.

(3) “*Bypassing the United Nations*. Rarely does a diplomatic meeting occur over a new international dispute without some sincere backers of the U.N. complaining that it is being “bypassed.” Invariably they urge that the dispute be taken up in the U.N. right away — even though none of the parties to the dispute wish to do so.

Such complaints confuse two things. One is the code of international conduct which binds all U.N. members in *all* their international relations, and which should never be bypassed. The other is the U.N. as a specially developed device, an institution with a Security Council and a General Assembly, which may or may not be the best place to iron out a particular dispute in line with the Charter's aims. When Britain, France and Israel suddenly resorted to force to settle their differences with Egypt our complaint was not that they had acted outside the U.N. but that they had acted in violation of the Charter and had imperiled world peace in the process.

The Charter obliges all members to “settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.” Nowhere does it require them to start this process at the U.N. In fact, Article 33 requires them “*first of all*” to try “negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choosing.” Only when such means are exhausted does the Charter demand referral to the Security Council.

In one type of case — disputes between states belonging to the same regional organization — it would be especially unwise for the U.N. to step in unless the regional body has tried and is not getting anywhere. This principle was challenged — and upheld — in 1954 when the Communist-dominated Guatemalan

Government urged the Security Council to deal with a coup by Guatemalan exiles invading from Honduras. The case was being handled at that time by the Organization of American States, of which both countries involved were members. On the United States' urging, the Security Council refused to put the matter on its agenda. On that day we not only defeated Communist ambitions in Central America; we also defeated an attempt to undermine the whole concept of regional organizations, which is enshrined in the U.N. Charter itself.

Compared with regional organizations, the U.N. is thus a place of last resort. That is how it was viewed by the Americans who helped to found it. If the United States in 1945 had been asked to abolish the Organization of American States and to replace it with the U.N., the Senate would certainly have refused its consent to such an arrangement.

Seeking peaceful solutions outside the U.N. is no more morally bad than practicing Christian ethics outside of church. In fact, it is what the Charter requires. Nobody need fear that such "bypassing" will go so far as to rob the U.N. of things to do. It is too useful to be neglected.

(4) *"United Nations debates are all talk and no action."* This criticism has a familiar sound to anybody who has served in Congress. To hear it about a body which lacks Congress' law-making powers is no surprise. Yet it is misleading, because it ignores the dramatic results which "talk" in the U.N. can bring about.

One example which Americans remember is the General Assembly debate and resolution in December, 1954, on Red China's illegal detention of fifteen American fliers, prisoners taken in Korea. The Assembly sent Secretary General Hammarskjold to Peiping, amid world-wide publicity, to seek the release of these men. By August, 1955, after the Chinese Reds had felt the impact of world opinion mobilized by the U.N., all fifteen fliers were safely home.

Another example, more far-reaching, goes back to Dec. 8, 1953, when President Eisenhower made a dramatic appearance before the General Assembly and proposed the creation of an International Atomic Energy Agency as a way out of the "fearful atomic dilemma." The reaction in the free world was immediate and enthusiastic on all sides. Leaders of such neutral countries as India and Indonesia hailed the proposal as an important step toward peace. The Soviet Union, surrounded by this universal attitude of acclaim, agreed after long hesitation to join the agency. Its charter was finalized last month in New York. No single step in recent years has done more to brighten America's image in the eyes of the world than this, which began in a U.N. speech.

The truth is that a delegate who talks into a U.N. microphone is using the world's greatest single engine for influencing public opinion — and thus, in turn, influencing the actions of governments. Even the Soviet Government, as experience has repeatedly shown, responds on occasion to world opinion — if only because it seeks popularity abroad in order to extend its power.

It is not legal powers, which the U.N. scarcely possesses — still less armies, which it lacks altogether — but influence upon world opinion which makes the U.N. a vital force in world politics today. That is why nations seek to join it and none seek to leave it, and that is why crucial U.N. contests often take place over the mere question of whether or not a given subject shall be debated at all. The U.N. may indeed be “all talk,” or nearly so — but it is the kind of talk which is the father of action.

(5) *The United States — omnipotent or impotent in the United Nations?* Finally, we encounter illusions about the standing of the United States in the U.N. Sometimes an advocate of a cause will urge me to “get the U.N. to do something,” as if America’s word were law at the U.N.

Others, noting that close allies of the United States often vote differently from us on U.N. resolutions, draw the opposite conclusion — that United States influence is non-existent.

Neither extreme is true. During the Stalin era, Soviet propaganda used to complain of the “automatic majority” which it claimed Washington obtained on U.N. votes simply by cracking the whip. There was nothing automatic about it then, nor is there now. It was, and is, a majority resting heavily on persuasion and honest criticism. Indeed, the only automatic voting bloc at the U.N. is the small one which Moscow controls.

Yet the United States influence in the U.N. remains great — both because of our national strength and because we try always to be alert for the ideas and wishes of other nations. This much can be said: in eleven years the United States has never lost a vote in the U.N. on any vital question. In fact, recent weeks have shown that we can find powerful U.N. majorities on our side even when our closest traditional allies vote against us. By maintaining our influence in the U.N., we strengthen friendships which are vital to us in the contest with communism — for, although we out-produce the whole world Communist empire, it outnumbers us in population by nearly six to one — and any nation in that situation needs friends.

Constantly, in our search for a cure for war, we are learning how to use the U.N. more effectively. It is a most intricate device and cannot be run without precise knowledge any more than a doctor would try to cure a brain tumor with a modern irradiation device he had never seen before.

Among other things, we have learned that the Secretary General of the U.N., if he has Mr. Hammarskjöld’s qualities, can render highly important services. Because of his office, he can go where no national representative would be effective. He can provide a “neutral” meeting ground for foreign ministers of contending nations. In explosive situations he can avert imminent danger of war by carrying with him, and skillfully exploiting, the prestige and authority of the U.N. whose servant he is.

As we learn lessons of this kind, the political contrivance called the U.N.

becomes more effective and more reliable in its main job — preventing war and preventing the conquest of nations.

The United States has use for that effectiveness. Moscow's new drive against free nations, involving military, political and economic penetration, presents constant challenges. It is especially important that we manage to cooperate imaginatively with those countries which are not allies of ours, but are not satellites of the Soviet Union either.

In the U.N. we can show, by our bearing toward these countries, that the United States wants no satellites, but that we welcome friends and partners who value their own freedom as much as we value ours. For years that has been the meaning of our support for the small but effective United Nations Technical Assistance program. Now our actions and our votes on the crisis in Egypt have spoken still more clearly for us in the same countries.

At age 11, the U.N. is a thriving organization. Out of the spotlight, dozens of U.N. economic, scientific, technical and educational programs go forward. They add to the structure of international cooperation for common benefit and lay a basis for international order.

But the keystone to the U.N. arch will always be in the political field — war prevention. If the U.N. were to fail in that key field as the League of Nations failed, the Specialized Agencies and special United Nations programs and, in fact, the whole edifice of civilized international teamwork would be shaken to its foundations and in all probability World War III would be upon us. Our actions in the U.N. in these last critical weeks have been designed to prevent just that.

It is up to the sovereign members of the U.N., both within and beyond the U.N.'s doors, to show the strength and intelligence to prevent that catastrophe. Only they can do it — for the U.N. itself has no will of its own.

Twenty years ago an American commentator, appraising the progress of the League of Nations through its first sixteen years, ended with this sentence: "Now in Geneva splendid new buildings to house the League are nearing completion, an appropriate symbol of its permanent character."

The U.N. was more soundly begun, but it is much too soon to call it permanent. That depends on whether the sovereign and law-abiding members of the U.N., both within and outside the U.N.'s doors, are willing to "put up" whenever the going gets rough. On this willingness, in the last analysis, the maintenance of peace and the continued existence of the U.N. depend.

We have had some rude shocks in the past weeks — but if the U.N. had not been built to withstand shocks it would be worthless. In the glare of crisis there have been moments of splendor from which we can take courage for the future.

QUESTIONS

1. Wherein lies the chief power of the U.N., and what is its chief purpose?
2. What attributes of a world government does the U.N. lack?
3. What is the title of the chief officer of the U.N.? Who holds this position at the present time?
4. Compare the population of the "Communist empire" with that of the United States. Has this resulted in our being outvoted in the U.N.?
5. Is a member nation obliged to have recourse to the U.N. to settle its disputes? What other means are open?



MEN AND WOMEN

Marybeth Little

Are College Men Boys?

*Marybeth Little, now on the staff of the New York Times Magazine, was formerly college editor of Mademoiselle.*

Chatting with a college man is supposed to be fun. So when we asked our College Board Members to ask five college men, "What do you think of a young woman's combining career and motherhood?" we thought we were giving our reporters (1) a pleasant assignment, (2) a good excuse for a coffee date. And since this is a question of current importance to college women, we were also looking for thoughtful answers.

The reports were, to say the least, startling. No fun. No thoughtful answers. Just an overwhelming "My little woman will stay home." Most of the College Board Members, as surprised as we, couldn't hold themselves to mere reporting. They had to fume a little. One college girl noted rather plaintively: "If all men are like this crew I pity the woman who wants to work. The male ego is colossal, easily wounded too." Our reaction to the male ego as we read all the reports was one of stunned disbelief. But see for yourself: "When I get married I want the little woman to be mine, all mine. I don't want to share her with a profession.



I want her to stay home, be queen of the castle." (Utah.) "Whether she likes it or not, her job is to be a homemaker." (Cornell.) "There can be but *one* answer to the question should young mothers have careers outside the home. That is a most definite and emphatic no!" (N.Y.U.) "I'll give her enough love and respect so she won't have to seek it elsewhere . . . and if she's an efficient homemaker she'll be able to keep mentally busy with housework." (Minnesota.) "I want a large family. The kids will take all *her* [italics ours] time." (Harvard.) Now we have to admit in all fairness that there were a few who considered the woman's worries: an education down the kitchen drain, the probability of financial need, the threat of stagnation. To wit: "I think a woman with an education is fine but she shouldn't let it go to her head." (Idaho State.) "Of course a college education can be of value to a girl. It helps her to find a husband." (Dartmouth.) "A job is all right if the wife is clever enough to convince her husband that he hasn't failed in his role of family provider. I doubt if he would take it right, though. Men are just that way." (Middlebury.) Remarkable candor, we'd say. "Even if we're hard-pressed financially I wouldn't like it. I wouldn't feel important. I'd rather she'd scrimp and pinch pennies." (Ohio.) "My wife will never work — unless I need her to put me through grad school, of course." (Harvard.) "A job's okay. Not a career. A career woman, to me, means a woman who considers herself equal to a man." This from Minnesota. A brother under the skin from Idaho State commented: "As an employer I would pay young mothers half the amount I'd pay a man. I don't think women should be given jobs equal to men's." "By all means let the woman have a career. Otherwise she'll just become a sloppy Hausfrau. Oh, yes, the children might become juvenile delinquents, but then there are difficulties in every situation." (Northwestern.) "A successful career, which would be the only type worth engaging in, would detract from the 'oneness' of marriage. A man's career is different, naturally." (Utah.)

Somehow we find all this depressing. Not that we want to jump on a soapbox, cajole women into offices, men to the home. But like most of our College Board Members we'd expected some sense of reality, some concern too for the woman's feelings in the matter. Most of the girls tell us they'd like a husband and a job (though not all are sure about working after they have children); they do, however, want jobs they can take seriously and develop into interesting, well-paid ones. Some have parents who expect tangible proof that daughter's five-thousand-dollars-and-up education was worth the sacrifices. Some have read statistics on widowhood and realize that starting a career "when the kids are out of school" (as a few college men were big enough to suggest) is difficult. Others point out that while some prospective husbands say a career is okay if the wife stays at home to write or paint or whatever, not all girls have stay-at-home talents, most of them need to work with other people in an office or a store or a laboratory. Some suggest that a happy mother is better for a child

than an unhappy one and that some women can be good mothers although not necessarily good housekeepers. "It's the quality of time that means most between mother and child. Better three hours of fun than eight hours of bickering" is the way one college girl put it.

Now please don't misunderstand. It's really not the issue, it's the attitude that ruffles. We're delighted the college man is confident of his future earning power, of his ability to be all things to his college-grad wife. But somehow most of the replies were so short on economics, so long on ego that we began wondering if college men weren't in fact college boys.

And then — eureka! — at the bottom of the pile we found a comment by an interviewee (described as "a Minnesota intellectual") who was grown-up enough to know that marriage and the decisions faced in marriage are bipartisan. He said: "It depends, I think, on the woman herself. A mother is not a tool in the home. She is an individual with the interests and the mind and the aspirations of an individual."

Now there is only one pressing question left in our minds: Does one swallow make a summer?

#### QUESTIONS

1. Give two of the college men's main reasons why wives shouldn't work.
2. What reasons in favor of a wife's working does the author advance?
3. Was a typical cross-section of college youth selected for these interviews? What is the verdict of five men chosen at random on your campus?
4. If these college men are to have their way, does a girl need a college education?
5. In your opinion, should a young wife combine motherhood and a career?

Charles W. Cole

## American Youth Goes Monogamous

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It was an autumn Saturday in 1935 when I was eight years out of college that I first realized I belonged to the older generation. But I did not understand that I was witnessing the first stages of a revolution which has dramatically altered the folkways of American youth and created a new and strange chasm between my generation and the next. Across the gulf which divides the adults who reached maturity in the early 1930s and the youngsters growing up today, communication on some subjects is difficult if not impossible.

The occasion was a dance at a fraternity house. My wife and I were chaperons. It was the first such dance we had attended since 1927. We noticed that the stag line was very small in comparison to our day, but thought that perhaps it was harder to get stags to come in depression times. One of my students was a tall dark basketball player named Fred. We saw him dancing with a vivacious girl in a bright yellow dress. Twenty minutes later he was still dancing with the same girl. We commented to each other on the fact that he was stuck with the girl and felt sorry for him. Another twenty minutes passed. He was still dancing with the same girl over in a corner by the fireplace. At this point I felt so perturbed about his plight that I went up to one of his fraternity brothers and said:

"Fred is stuck with that girl in the yellow dress; can't one of you do something about it?"

The young man looked at me wide-eyed and replied, "Oh, no! That's Fred's girl."

It was another five years before "going steady" was fully established as the standard and persuasive pattern for the social life of the young. But today it is so completely dominant that the debutante parties in some large cities where, through a kind of stubborn conservatism, stags are still used and the girl brings two or three young men with her are regarded as oddities by the young people.

Youth at present is almost completely monogamous in a thoroughly estab-

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lished fashion, and it is aggressively sure that its customs and ways are right.

Not long ago, I was talking with three college seniors. They had been questioning me about the social customs of the 'twenties, which to them are as quaint (and as remote) as the 'nineties were to my generation, but appealing because of the good music like "Tea for Two" or "St. Louis Blues" and dances like the Charleston. I had been telling about stag lines and cutting in and getting stuck and the old story of the five-dollar bill held behind the girl's back. One of the seniors asked:

"But why did you cut in on a girl?"

I replied, "Well, maybe you knew her and she was a good dancer, or fun to talk to or had what we called a 'good line.' Or perhaps you didn't know her and got introduced and cut in. Then if the two of you got on together you asked her for a date."

There was a hushed pause. Then another of the seniors questioned me a little timidly. "Do you mean that when another man brought the girl, you felt you could ask her for a date right at the dance?"

"Certainly," I answered; "in fact, that was the way you met new girls."

A pall of disapproving silence settled over us, as the young men contemplated the immorality, the stark and blatant indecency of their parents' generation. Then one of them with visible tact changed the subject.

A boy today who seeks to make friends with a girl somebody else brings to a dance is known as a "bird-dog" and what he does is called "bird-dogging." The origin of the phrase is neither known nor obvious. But the activity is frowned on in the most thoroughgoing fashion. There was the case of Weston Brewer. He was a member of the Alpha Beta Gamma fraternity. At one of the house dances to which he had brought his own girl, he met a girl named Maureen, from Boston, who had been brought by one of the other brothers, Tim Morton. With Weston and Maureen it was love at first sight in the best romantic tradition. Weston went to Boston to see her. He went every weekend. When this fact became known, the matter was brought up at the next chapter meeting and it was proposed that Weston be expelled from the fraternity for bird-dogging a brother's girl. But Weston's friends — though in no way condoning his actions — pointed out that Maureen was not really Tim's girl, since he had only one date with her before the dance. It was concluded, therefore, that, while Weston was guilty of the worst taste, expulsion from the chapter would not be justified.

### *Timing and Liking*

One of the delicate questions in going steady is when the relationship may be said to have been established. Here, there is some difference of opinion. But in general three dates in fairly rapid succession are not enough and six dates are plenty. So the fourth or the fifth date may be considered crucial. I once saw a girl from the Middle West in tears. She had had three dates with a boy and had

got on well with him. But she felt she did not like him enough to go with him on a steady basis and therefore was compelled to refuse the fourth date. "Like" is now, by the way, a word of art. In "Bill likes Sue," it implies the first stages of what, if all goes well, may result in love.

Going steady is a rather stylized relationship. (The phrase "going steady" is used in high schools though not much in college circles. But the institution is as strong in the latter as the former.) When it is fully established, it means that the boy will not go out with any other girl or the girl with any other boy. It means further that each can count on the other for any date, dance, or other social event. There are certain exceptions — concessions as it were to the weakness of the flesh. Let us say that Jack comes from Missoula, Montana, and is attending an Eastern college. In Missoula, he is going steady with Mary. But to be denied female companionship for months at a time is more than he can be expected to endure. It is not, then, wholly improper for Jack, under these conditions, to go out with Nancy from Vassar while he is in the East. Ideally Jack should tell Nancy about Mary and Mary about Nancy. And Nancy (or perhaps Mary) should be aware that she is secondary, the under-steady so to speak.

But it would be even better and Jack would be more admired by his fellows — granted that Mary is really his girl — if he lived a completely celibate and monastic life while at college. This would be regarded as a great sacrifice, but it would bring him respect and sympathy.

This sympathy might even take concrete form. There was the case of Donald, a junior in the Gamma Beta Alpha house. He was a scholarship boy with means so limited that he could not go home to Beaver Falls, Minnesota, for Christmas vacation. At home he had a girl named Grace, whom he dearly liked and to whom he was completely faithful. The time came for the spring house dance and all the chapter members were urged to bring dates. Don sadly refused and thought mournfully of Grace. The brothers were so deeply impressed by his constancy that they raised a pool to buy Grace an airplane ticket East and to pay all her expenses. The big scene took place before the dance when his friends said to Don, "We've got a blind date for you," led him protesting to the library, threw open the doors, and there was Grace beaming over a corsage of orchids. This romantic denouement made the weekend a happy and thrilling one for the whole chapter.

Going steady is a progressive not a static relationship. At the start, it means merely a monogamous social arrangement, but it is likely to move on to a point where the couple gets "pinned." (The typical symbol is the fraternity pin, but if the college has no fraternities, a Phi Beta key, a club emblem, or military insignia may be used.) Overtly "pinning" merely means that the girl can and does wear the boy's fraternity pin. Inwardly it means more than that, though there are various degrees. Merely "pinned" implies that the boy and girl plan

to go steady in the future, like each other a good deal, and expect the relationship to develop further. To be seriously pinned means "engaged to be engaged" or perhaps even "engaged" preparatory to getting a ring, securing parental approval, and clearing up other details.

Since pinning is in many ways the equivalent of the betrothal of earlier times, it is frequently quite ceremonious. Friends of the pinned couple may give a little party, at which the girl appears with the pin on for the first time, and toasts may be drunk in champagne. There was the case of a returning alumnus of elder vintage who started to go into the music room in his fraternity house, but was stopped with the admonition, "Don't go in there, Joe is pinning his girl." The alumnus completely misunderstood the situation until the young couple emerged wreathed in smiles, the girl with the pin on her bosom, to receive congratulations.

The relationship of going steady, even of a pinned couple, may be ended with somewhat more ease than an engagement can be broken. It may be terminated by either party or by mutual agreement. If either the boy or the girl ends it firmly, he or she is said to have "axed" the other.

The duration of the "steady" arrangement is most variable. It may last from a few days to many years. There are instances where a couple started going steady in junior high school, continued through high school and college, and got married after eight or more years of going together. A boy or girl on the other hand may have several "steadies" in the course of a single year. But it is considered frivolous and light-minded to change too often. So monogamous (pro tem) is the younger generation that after losing a steady, it is thought proper to wait a decent interval before seeking another.

The philanderer of the 'twenties who dated a different girl every night and went out with dozens in the course of a year has disappeared. So has the prom trotter of earlier times. A clever girl today might conceivably have a male friend in four or five different colleges, but she would not be much admired if she had two at the same college. If she collected an array of fraternity pins from several boys — I knew of girls in the 'twenties who had as many as seven — she would be condemned by her acquaintances.

The dances have perhaps changed most visibly of all the social institutions. While the system of going steady has become more formalized, dances have tended to become more informal. (Why dress up for someone you see so often and know so well?) They have tended to become shorter. (When you dance with only one partner, two hours or so is enough.) There is a good deal of sitting around and listening to music or entertainment instead of dancing. In fact, an effort is made to secure bands worth listening to rather than those whose music is especially suitable for dancing. The dances are a little heavy and somber because the excitement and shifting around of cutting in has disappeared and because neither the boys nor the girls feel under any special obligation to be gay and entertaining. The big dance of the prom type is fading slowly away. Since a

couple is going to dance together anyhow they may as well do it in an informal fashion to phonograph records, or at a night spot, without going to the trouble and expense of attending a big formal affair.

### *Getting Married*

The revolution in the courtship and dating procedures of our youth has had profound effects on our society and even on our economy.

The average age of marriage has dropped very rapidly. A college girl of the 1920s *said*, at least, that she was looking forward to a career. Most of them did not expect to get married until two or three years after graduation. The college girl today declares quite frankly that she wants to get married and she frequently does so while still in college. A girl who gets as far as junior year in college without having acquired a man is thought to be in grave danger of becoming an old maid. A manless senior is considered to be more or less on the shelf.

Matrimony at an early age is facilitated by the disappearance of the idea that a man should be able to support a wife before he gets married. The GI Bill of Rights with its higher allowances for married veterans seems to have destroyed the older notions, and to have made the idea of married undergraduate students acceptable. Nowadays, one or both sets of parents are expected to "help." If the parents cannot be of assistance it is perfectly normal for the girl to take a job and help to support her husband through medical school or law school.

And then there is the birth rate. Thirty years ago a young couple usually planned to have two children and usually did. Today the ideal seems to be four or five children. The effect of this shift in attitude on the birth rate has been spectacular. Among college graduates of both sexes the classes ten years out already have substantially as many children as the classes twenty-five years out. It is known also of course that all by itself an earlier average age of marriage will raise the birth rate.

Why young people want more children is by no means clear. Partly the new attitude may arise from the fact that there is no servant problem. Since there are no servants, there is no question of waiting till it is possible to afford a maid to look after the baby. Housekeeping has, moreover, been much simplified by washing machines, frozen foods, diaper services, and a score of other developments. Baby-sitting has become a national and fairly well organized institution. Partly the trend to large families may arise from the fact that many of the young people marrying today were only children or had a single sibling. They seem to envy the children who come from large families and had a more varied and exciting family circle. Partly, too, young people seem to be seeking in their own families the security that is outwardly denied by the unsettled state of the world.

In the 'twenties and early 'thirties, when the social pattern was one of multiple or polygamous dating — on the part of both boys and girls — young people did not think nearly so much about marriage as they do today. Thirty years ago

a boy and a girl could have dates over a long period without seriously considering that they might some day get married. They dated each other for the fun of it, because they enjoyed each other's company, because they liked the same things, or merely because in the competitive social life of their time it was a good thing to have dates — the more, the better. Today young people often play with the idea of marriage as early as the second or third date, and they certainly think about it by the fifth or sixth. By the time they have been going steady for a while they are quite apt to be discussing the number and names of their future children. The fact that the steady may well be a future spouse gives a different color to the social life of the youth. It makes it more serious, less frivolous. The boys and girls spend a lot of time discussing their relationship and whether it is founded on bases of long-run compatibility.

The oddest thing about the revolution in the social life of youth in the last twenty years is that it constitutes the triumph of rural nineteenth-century American more in the urban and suburban society of the mid-twentieth century. Anybody over seventy who was brought up in a country village or town finds the social customs of young people today strangely familiar. In the 1880s or 1890s it was normal to have boys and girls pair off in a more or less stable fashion, and such pairing often ended eventually in marriage. The very phrase "going steady" has the ring of rural America under President Cleveland.

### *The Passing of the Wall Flower*

Why have our young people reverted so sharply to the ways of an earlier era and a simpler society? There seems to be no clear-cut answer. The change has often been ascribed to the second world war, when the sudden shortage of men made each girl eager to hold on to any available male. But it was well under way before 1939. The new folkways may be related to the Great Depression when a boy putting out money for a girl on dances, movies, or the like wanted to be sure of some return on his investment. It is also true that the fiercely competitive social life of the 'twenties with the stag lines and the cutting in and the multiple dates meant that a popular girl had a very good time indeed. But the majority of girls were not popular. They dreaded being wall flowers. They were the ones with whom boys sometimes got stuck. It may be that the less popular majority of girls slowly created the present democratic system, under which any girl with a steady is just as well off as any other girl with a steady. Since each boy wants a steady too and since the numbers of boys and girls are about equal everybody seems better off at present, though it is possible that some polygamous male instincts are thwarted. On the other hand, girls would insist that the new system was created by the boys who are aggressive, possessive, and jealous of all rivals.

The new ways may also be related to the search for security. The boy or girl who has a steady is secure. Each partner knows that the other can be counted on for the coming high school dance or the next football game. In a day when the



population moves from home to home with such freedom and when so many homes are broken by divorce or otherwise, this kind of security is very precious to young people. Perhaps, too, the general decline of competition under the welfare state has led to less competitive social customs. Just as the retail stores have tried to shelter themselves from all price competition behind the so-called Fair Trade laws, so our young people have divided into non-competing twosomes.

Whatever the origin of the present pre-marital monogamy of youth, it is one of the most important phenomena of recent times. Already it is responsible for the new birth rate that has exploded the predictions that our population would become stable in numbers in the 1970's. It looks as if the United States would grow in population rapidly and indefinitely. Already it has produced the tidal wave of babies that will overwhelm the high schools in 1961 and the colleges in 1964. Already it has created a situation where parents and children find it hard to communicate on social matters. The mother who says to a daughter, "Why do you always have dates with Jimmy? Aren't there other nice boys?" seems to the daughter to be lacking in elementary understanding of the facts of social life.

It is too early to determine what the new system will do for the stability of marriage. On *a priori* grounds the oldsters would predict that a boy who had dated only one girl or at the most half-a-dozen would be less likely to find a permanently compatible mate than one who had gone out with fifty or a hundred. It would seem even that there might be anti-eugenic consequences, since the intelligent girl would have less chance of finding an intelligent boy to marry.

But it is also possible that a marriage relationship based on an elaborate system of pre-marital companionship progressing through recognized stages (dating, going steady, getting pinned, becoming engaged) may be built in a solid and enduring fashion. It is conceivable too that the fiercely monogamous pre-marital folkways may carry over into married life and erect strong buttresses to the institutions of marriage and the family.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What are the advantages of "monogamy" in courtship? disadvantages? Illustrate from experiences of your own or your friends.
2. What effects has "going steady" had upon social functions? Do you consider these changes desirable?
3. Do current dating practices result in boys and girls maturing earlier or later than the generation of the 1920s? Why?
4. What were the rules of "going steady" in your high school?
5. List slang vocabulary having to do with dating.

Katherine Anne Porter

## Marriage Is Belonging

*"As soon as I learned to form letters on paper, at about three years, I began to write stories," says Katherine Anne Porter. She was brought up in Texas and Louisiana and educated in small Southern convent schools. Two volumes, Flowering Judas (1930) and Pale Horse, Pale Rider (1939), established her reputation as one of the outstanding short story writers of this century. She has been called the American Katherine Mansfield — writing prose of "extraordinary purity and concentration . . . delicate yet strong." In her stories and essays she shows "human relations in their constantly shifting phases."*

The trouble with me is — always was — that if you say "marriage" to me, instantly the word translates itself into "love," for only in such terms can I grasp the idea at all, or make any sense of it. The two are hopelessly associated, or rather identified, in my mind; that is to say, love is the only excuse for marriage, if any excuse is necessary. I often feel one should be offered. Love without marriage can be very awkward for all concerned; but marriage without love simply removes that institution from the territory of the humanly admissible. Love is a state in which one lives who loves, and whoever loves has given himself away: love then, and not marriage, is belonging. Marriage is the public declaration of a man and a woman that they have formed a secret alliance, with the intention to belong to, and share with each other, a mystical estate; mystical exactly in the sense that the real experience cannot be communicated to others nor explained even to oneself on rational grounds.

By love, let me make it clear, I do not refer only to that ecstatic reciprocal cannibalism which goes popularly under the name, and which is indeed commonly one of the earliest biological symptoms (Boy Eats Girl and vice versa) for, like all truly mystical things, love is rooted deeply and rightly in this world and this flesh. This phase is natural, dangerous but not necessarily fatal, so remarkably educational it would be a great pity to miss it; further, of great importance, for the flesh in real love is one of the many bridges to the spirit; still, a phase only, which being passed is too often mistaken for the whole thing, and the end of it. This is an error based on lack of imagination, or the simple incapacity for further and deeper exploration of life, there being always on hand great numbers of people who are unwilling or unable to grow up, no matter what happens to them. It leads to early divorce, or worse. Like that young man whose downward career began with mere murder, this error can lead to infidelity, untruthfulness, eavesdropping, gambling, drinking, and finally to pro-

crastination and incivility. These two last can easily have destroyed more marriages than any amount of murder, or even untruthfulness.

Every young married pair believes their marriage is going to be quite different from the others, and they are right — it always is. The task of regulating its unruly impulses is a thorn in the souls of theologians; its social needs and uses the insoluble riddle of lawmakers. Through all ages known to man almost everybody, even those who wouldn't be seen dead wearing a wedding ring, has agreed that somehow, in some way, at some time or another, marriage has simply got to be made to work better than it does, or ever has, for that matter. Yet on the whole, my guess is that it works about as well as any other human institution, and rather better than a great many. The drawback is, it is the merciless revealer, the great white searchlight turned on the darkest places of human nature; it demands of all who enter it the two most difficult achievements possible: that each must be honest with himself, and faithful to another. I am speaking here only of the internal reality of marriage, not its legal or even its social aspects.

In its present form it is comparatively modern. As an idea, it must have begun fairly soon after the human male discovered his highly important role in the bringing forth of young. For countless aeons, we are told by those who pretend to know, it was believed that the powers of generation were vested in women alone, people having never been very bright about sex, right from the start. When men at last discovered — who knows how? — that they were fathers, their pride in their discovery must have been equalled only by their indignation at having worshiped women as vessels of the Great Mystery when all along they should have been worshiping themselves. Pride and wrath and no doubt the awful new problem of what to do with the children, which had never bothered them before, drove them on to an infinite number of complicated and contradictory steps toward getting human affairs on a sounder basis. And, after all this time (skipping lightly over the first hundred thousand years of total confusion), in our fine big new busy Western world we have succeeded in establishing it not only as the ideal but in religious and legal fact (if not altogether in practice), as the very crown and glory of human ties, a one-man-one-woman-until-death sort of marriage rivaling the swans for purity, with the exchange of a ritual oath not only to stick to each other through thick and thin, to practice perfect fidelity, flawless forbearance and a modified bodily servitude, but to love each other dearly and kindly to the end.

All this to be accomplished in a physical situation of the direst intimacy, in which all claims to the most ordinary privacy may be disregarded by either or both. I shall not attempt to catalogue the daily accounting for acts, words, states of feeling and even thoughts, the perpetual balance and check between individual wills and points of view, the unbelievable amount of tact, intelligence, flexibility, generosity and God knows what it requires for two people to go on growing together and in the same direction instead of cracking up and falling apart.

Now in this strange time, when everything is changing, so many old walls falling, so many old faiths and feelings being questioned, questioned bitterly, to rock bottom, to the death — marriage, it does seem, is holding up rather well. It seems to be the one institution in which, as more freedom is granted within the bond by law and by custom, the more the married pair assumes personal responsibility for their life together and sets themselves to make together a life that may very well be their one security, their one true center of fixed faith. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the need of a human being, not a madman, or a saint, or a beast, or a self-alienated genius who is all of these in one, and therefore the scapegoat for all the rest, to live at peace — and by peace I mean in reconciliation, not easy contentment — with another human being, and with that one in a group or society where he feels he belongs. The best, the very best, of all these relationships is that one in marriage between a man and a woman who are good lovers, good friends and good partners; who belong to each other, and to their children, and whose children belong to them: that is the meaning of the blood tie that binds them, and may bind them sometimes to the bone. Children cut their teeth on their parents and their parents cut their wisdom teeth on each other: that is what they are there for. It is never monotonous, and can sometimes be very memorably exciting for everybody. The ancient biological laws are still in force, the difference being merely in the way human beings regard them, and though I am not one to say all change is progress, in this one thing, a kind of freedom and ease of mind between men and women in marriage, or at least the possibility of it, change has been all for the better.

We have the bad habit, some of us, of looking back to a time — almost any time will do — when society was stable and orderly, family ties stronger and deeper, love more lasting and faithful, and so on. Let me be your Cassandra prophesying after the fact, and a long study of the documents in the case: It was never true, that is, no truer than it is now. Above all, as to domestic life in the nineteenth century — well, it was just as good in individual instances as the married pairs involved were able to make it, privately, between themselves. The less attention they paid to what they were expected to think and feel about marriage, and the more attention to each other as loved and loving, the better they did, for themselves and for everybody. The laws of public decorum were easy to observe, for they had another and better understanding. The Victorian-marriage feather bed was in fact set upon the shaky foundation of the wavering human heart, the inconsistent human mind, just as marriage is today, and was the broiling hotbed of every dislocation and disorder not only in marriage but all society, which we of the past two generations have lived through. Yet in love — this is what I have been talking about all the time — a certain number of well-endowed spirits, and there are surprisingly quite a lot of them in every generation, have always been able to take their world in stride, to live and die together and to keep all their strange marriage vows, not because they spoke them but

because like centuries of lovers before them they were prepared to live them in the first place.

A certain woman was apparently a prisoner for life in several ways: already thirty-five or -six years old, supposed to be an incurable invalid, whose father had forbidden any of his children to marry; and above all, a poet at a time when literary women were regarded as monsters almost. Yet she was able to write in the first flush of a bride's joy: "He preferred . . . of free and deliberate choice, to be allowed to sit only an hour a day by my side, to the fulfillment of the brightest dream which should exclude me in any possible world."

This could be illusion, but the proof of reality came fifteen years later. Just after her death her husband wrote to a friend: "Then came what my heart will keep till I see her again and longer — the most perfect expression of her love to me within my whole knowledge of her. Always smilingly, and happily, and with a face like a girl's; and in a few minutes she died in my arms, her head on my cheek."

If you exclaim that this is not fair, for after all, these two were, of course, the Robert Brownings, I can only reply that it is because I sincerely believe they were not so very special that I cite them. Don't be thrown off by that lyrical nineteenth-century speech, nor their fearless confidence not only in their own feelings but in the sympathy of their friends; it is the kind of love that makes real marriage, and there is more of it in the world than you might think, though the ways of expressing it follow the fashions of the times; and we certainly do not find much trace of it in our contemporary literature. It is *very* old-style, and it was, long before the Brownings. It is new, too. It is the very newest thing every day, renewed in an endless series of those fortunate people who may not have one point in common with the Brownings except that they know, or are capable of learning, the nature of love.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is "ecstatic reciprocal cannibalism"?
2. How well is marriage holding up under the strains of modern living? Compare with Victorian times.
3. What famous couple is cited as a model of married love?
4. Name two extremely difficult achievements which marriage demands of all who enter it. What are some obstacles to success in marriage?

Helena Kuo

## American Women Are Different

*Helena Kuo, a young Chinese writer, came to the United States in 1939 after spending two years as a good-will ambassador in England. She has edited a woman's page on a Chinese newspaper, conducted a column in the London Daily Mail, lectured, worked for the Voice of America, and written many magazine articles. In her well-received autobiography, I've Come a Long Way (1942), she told "the story of her career . . . also the story of the transition period the young people of China have been bridging — the long way between the past of the Elders and the present and future of Youth."*

### I

When I first came to America from China, it seemed to me that American women were the most wonderful creatures in creation. They looked so pretty, so smart, so free, so physically fit that I felt like a weed in an exhibition flower bed. I still look upon them with some awe, but I am no longer so sure that they are in all ways superior to our women of China. I have come to feel that too many American women are failures as women. They seem to have graduated in everything but the natural art of being females. Somehow, in the headlong rush for feminism, they have lost their femininity.

Perhaps I am wrong. But that's how it seems to me, a native of Canton, a newspaper woman from Shanghai, after about two years of life in your broad and amazing country.

I used to wonder when I read American papers and magazines why they gave so much space to "it" and "oomph" and "sex appeal." Now I think I know at least part of the answer. Especially among the sophisticated, but by imitation also among others, femininity has been glamorized out of existence; the real thing has become as rare as the dodo and everyone, man or woman, is seeking it desperately. They hasten to the movies or the slick magazines for a peep at human females as though it were a kind of miracle. I am still shocked by American women who rush to buy artificial bosoms to make them look like "sweater girls."

It seems to me that American women are making some tragic mistakes. They have allowed big business to take femininity away from them and turn it into a product. It has become something you shop for in the screen, on glossy paper and in drug stores. The counters of any 5-and-10 emporium are loaded with female charm at cut prices. Femininity is being manufactured and completely distorted in its package wrappings. As a result, the American city women, with their standardized faces, legs, shoes and figures, seem so uniform that we of the

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East cannot recognize them individually. In China, we always had great difficulty in telling your film stars from one another. We had a system of numbers to identify them until Garbo came along — and then, alas, a bevy of them began to look like Garbo, necessitating another system of numbers.

American city women seem to come off the production line so rapidly that they look like members of a Rockette dancing chorus. If a man misses the type he wants one year, he will find her when she comes off the high school or college assembly line the next year. She will be definitely blonde or platinum, flat-chested or high-bosomed, bold or coy, if such is the style of the year. She will say the same things at parties and give or withhold her charms in the same degree as all others.

When he marries her, she will take him for granted as a meal ticket just as the one he missed would have done. She will expect him to keep her better than she has ever been kept before and would be shocked by the idea — an idea that is so natural to a Chinese wife — that she must share the full burden. He will turn her into a fur-bearing animal at his own expense, the fur to be changed at regular intervals as recommended by the magazines.

From cocktail parties, he will be privileged to take her home in a condition that would have been dangerous to her reputation in spinsterhood, but is ever so smart when covered by a marriage certificate. At parties, she will be more provocative to other men and will have acquired new glamor in being a young married. Even if she is “fond” of her man, she somehow regards the whole arrangement as the unavoidable preliminary to a divorce. I am constantly amazed by how well versed even happily married American women seem to be in the intricacies of divorce law, especially as it affects alimony.

No wonder there are so many gray-haired young men in your country, and so many tinted-haired women lunching alone or in groups in the autumn of their lives!

Our Chinese ideal is quite the reverse of the mass-produced glamor women of your country. I am, myself, one of the new “emancipated” generation of Chinese women, and passed as a feminist at home. But I am distinctly “backward,” if not quite primitive, in contrast to your women here. They have been emancipated to the point where they are scarcely women any more, even in the elementary biological sense. The casualness of the sex relation here is not easy for a Chinese to understand. Our ancient institution of concubinage seems highly moral by comparison.

We Chinese believe that all women are desirable to some men, just as all men are desirable to some women. We do not assume that all men favor the same kind of woman, but that they seek out women for their individual tastes. But if our women try for individuality in outward appearance, they are much alike inwardly. They are instinctively and without question devoted to their families and their husbands. When things go badly with a Chinese wife, she remem-

bers the age-old saying, "If you marry a dog, you must follow a dog," which is her way of saying that she must stick to the man she has chosen for good or ill.

From the beginning of their lives, Chinese women are taught that their main job is to be real women. We are taught in our school books that there are three obediences and four virtues and we cling to them more tightly than to the one "virtue" the Anglo-Saxon language associates with its women. Way back in the second century A.D., China had its first "career woman." Her name was Ban Tso. After being widowed, and at the Emperor's request, she recorded that women should be polite, know when to talk and when to keep silent, be well dressed, and not extravagant in anything. These precepts have become second nature with us. The result is that an unmarried Chinese woman is a rare person. There are very few Chinese maiden ladies of uncertain age and China has the lowest divorce rate of any country, though divorce is exceedingly easy.

## II

In America, I have noticed, many plain women have the most attractive and attentive husbands, while many beautiful women are lonely and nervous and cannot "hold their man." This is easy for Chinese to understand, because we can see that these plain women have learned how to be real women — a lesson Chinese women have been learning for many thousand years.

Chinese women are taught that they are the beginning of life, but not the end. They have a philosophy that lies close to the earth they cultivate. "Others gave birth to us, we give birth to others." We have sweated, toiled and starved by the side of our men — that is why we can defy flood, famine and invasions as we are now doing. Divorce is painful to us. It is as disfiguring as losing a leg, or being condemned to spend the rest of one's life with a scarred face. A Chinese woman whose marriage goes awry just hides her face in sorrow, as a decent-minded American might when her husband dies. She has lost him. She mourns him accordingly, even if the "blame" is his. In your country, I have been invited to gay parties to celebrate a divorce!

American women, when they marry, want to "preserve their independence." They insist on their right to be attractive to other men. Well, they get their independence at the price of giving up their unique role as women. When we Chinese women marry, we want to believe that we have moulded our lives into another life. We feel it as an act of creation. We believe that "woman is made of water and man of clay." The meaning of this is that the clay of man cracks unless it is permeated by water — a discovery made by the Creator when he made man of clay and saved him from crumbling into nothingness by adding water.

Madame Kuan Tao-sheng, wife of the great Yuan painter, Chao Meng-fu, expressed this idea when she found her husband's ardor was cooling. One day, when he was moping for his mistress, she wrote the following poem and her



husband's heart was so touched that he gave up his mistress and returned to his wife.

Between you and me  
 There's too much passion  
 That's the reason why  
 There's such agitation!  
 Take a lump of clay  
 Wet it, pat it,  
 Make it a statue of you,  
 And a statue of me.  
 Then shatter them, clatter them.  
 Add some water,  
 And break them, and mould them,  
 Into a statue of you,  
 And a statue of me.  
 Then in mine there're bits of you,  
 And in you there're bits of me.  
 Nothing ever shall keep us apart.  
 When living, we'll sleep under the same cover,  
 When dead, we'll be buried together.

We Chinese women struggle to save our marriages when danger threatens. We don't "run home to mamma"; we stay and reason and usually win.

Life has been relatively easy for American women and that perhaps explains their basic tragedy. Even childbirth has been simplified for them into a painless dream. Indeed, they have solved every problem in life except how to be women and how to understand woman's natural instincts. Recently, I watched a lot of mass-produced city women here looking hungrily at a motion picture of sturdy pioneer life. It seemed to me that they are really hungry for simple things beyond highflown philosophizing: children, homes under their own direct care, and husbands into whose clay they can completely mould their own characters.

I realize that there are millions of exceptions, that there are American women close to the elemental pattern of our Chinese womanhood. But the national ideal, worshipped in your mass literature and mass entertainment, is the glamor woman, so that even the least glamorous American woman shares in this machine-made pattern. I think that much of this glamor woman's confusion is in the misuse of the word love and the idea of love. With us Chinese, love is not a diversion or a pastime or a career. Our language is very descriptive. The Chinese word for love means "gift of the heart" and it implies a gift that can be given only once, since there is but one heart.

American women have so much that they can teach us "backward" Chinese females. But I make bold to suggest that perhaps we Chinese women can teach them something in return — something they have forgotten.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the effects of advertising on glamor.
2. What standardizations in feminine styles and customs tend to make American women alike?
3. Why do so many American marriages fail? (Compare the Chinese and American definitions of "love.")
4. Do these criticisms apply to most American women or to some particular type?
5. Are there any "real" women in America?

David Riesman

## Americans and Kwakiutls

*David Riesman has been a lawyer, business executive, student of psychiatry, and college professor of sociology (University of Chicago). In 1948 and 1949, working on a grant from the Yale Committee on National Policy, he did the research for a study of American character which was published in 1950 under the title, The Lonely Crowd. Almost immediately The Lonely Crowd became a best seller and modern classic. The reason for its success is said to be that "Mr. Riesman not only describes but also explains. He never forgets that he lives among those he has studied and that before reducing them to types he has felt their feelings and understood their thoughts." In 1952 Riesman published a companion study, Faces in the Crowd.*

Moralists are constantly complaining that the ruling vice of the present time is pride. This is true in one sense, for indeed everybody thinks that he is better than his neighbor or refuses to obey his superior; but it is extremely false in another, for the same man who cannot endure subordination or equality has so contemptible an opinion of himself that he thinks he is born only to indulge in vulgar pleasures. He willingly takes up with low desires without daring to embark on lofty enterprises, of which he scarcely dreams.

Thus, far from thinking that humility ought to be preached to our contemporaries, I would have endeavors made to give them a more enlarged idea of themselves and of their kind. Humility is unwholesome to them; what they most want is, in my opinion, pride.

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

From *The Lonely Crowd*, by David Riesman. By permission of the Yale University Press.

The image of power in contemporary America presented in the preceding chapters will possibly not be easily recognized by the reader. Current discussions of power in America are usually based on a search for a ruling class (for instance, Burnham's discovery of the "managers," Mills's of the labor leaders and others). And Americans themselves, rather than being the mild and cooperative people we have portrayed, are, to many observers and to themselves, power-obsessed or money-mad or concerned with conspicuous display. Or, as in the parable I shall use to illustrate my argument, Americans are felt, and feel themselves, to be more like rivalrous Kwakiutl Indian chiefs and their followers, than like peaceable, cooperative Pueblo agriculturists. Perhaps by further pursuing these images of power and personality we may be able to clarify the discrepancies between political fact and political ideology dwelt on in preceding chapters.

Ruth Benedict's book, *Patterns of Culture*, describes in vivid detail three primitive societies: the Pueblo Indians of the southwest, the people of the Island of Dobu in the Pacific, and the Kwakiutl Indians of the northwest coast of America.<sup>1</sup>

The Pueblo Indians are pictured as a peaceable, cooperative society, in which no one wishes to be thought a great man and everyone wishes to be thought a good fellow. Sexual relations are taken with little jealousy or other violent response; infidelity is not severely punished. Death, too, is taken in stride, with little violent emotion; indeed, emotion is, in general, subdued. While there are considerable variations in economic status, there is little display of economic power and even less of political power; there is a spirit of cooperation with family and community.

The Dobu, by contrast, are portrayed as virtually a society of paranoids in which each man's hand is against his neighbor's in sorcery, theft and abuse; in which husband and wife alternate as captives of the spouse's kin; and in which infidelity is deeply resented. Dobuan economic life is built on sharp practice in inter-island trading, on an intense feeling for property rights, and on a hope of getting something for nothing through theft, magic, and fraud. Except for nearby Alor, few pictures as grim as this are to be found in anthropological literature.

The third society, the Kwakiutl, is also intensely rivalrous. But the rivalry consists primarily in conspicuous consumption, typified by feasts called "potlatches," at which chiefs outdo each other in providing food and in burning up the blankets and sheets of copper which are the main counters of wealth in the society; sometimes even a house or a canoe is sent up in flames in a final bid for glory. Indeed, the society is a caricature of Veblen's conspicuous consumption; certainly, the potlatches of the Kwakiutl chiefs serve "as the legitimate channel by which the community's surplus product has been drained off and consumed,

<sup>1</sup> *Patterns of Culture* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1934; reprinted New York, Pelican Books, 1946).

to the greater spiritual comfort of all parties concerned." Veblen was, in fact, familiar with these northwest-coast "coming out parties."

I have asked students who have read Ruth Benedict's book which of these three cultures in their opinion most closely resembles the obviously more complex culture of the United States. The great majority see Americans as Kwakiutls. They emphasize American business rivalry, sex and status jealousy, and power drive. They see Americans as individualists, primarily interested in the display of wealth and station.

A minority of students, usually the more politically radical, say that America is more like Dobu. They emphasize the sharp practice of American business life, point to great jealousy and bitterness in family relations, and in terms of aggression see American politics, domestic and international, as existing almost in Hobbes's state of nature.

No students have argued that there are significant resemblances between the culture of the Hopi and Zuni Pueblos and American culture — they wish that there were.

Yet when we turn then to examine the culture patterns of these very students, we see little evidence either of Dobu or Kwakiutl ways. The wealthy students go to great lengths not to be conspicuous — things are very different from the con-coated days of the '20's. The proper uniform is one of purposeful shabbiness. In fact, none among the students except a very rare Lucullus dares to be thought uppity. Just as no modern Vanderbilt says "the public be damned," so no modern parents would say: "Where Vanderbilt sits, there is the head of the table. I teach my son to be rich." <sup>2</sup>

It is, moreover, not only in the virtual disappearance of conspicuous consumption that the students have abandoned Kwakiutl-like modes of life. Other displays of gifts, native or acquired, have also become more subdued. A leading college swimming star told me: "I get sore at the guys I'm competing against. Something's wrong with me. I wish I could be like X who really cooperates with the other fellows. He doesn't care so much about winning."

There seems to be a discrepancy between the America that students personally meet and make for themselves as students and the America they think they will move into when they leave the campus. Their image of the latter is based to a large extent on legends about America that are preserved in our literature. For example, many of our novelists and critics still believe that America, as compared with other cultures, is a materialistic nation of would-be Kwakiutl chiefs. There may have been some truth in this picture in the Gilded Age, though Henry James saw how ambiguous the issue was between America and Europe even then.

<sup>2</sup> The remark is quoted by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., in "The Soldier's Faith," 1895, reprinted in *Speeches* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1934), p. 56. I am indebted to Carl Withers for discerning observations concerning changing campus mores.

The materialism of these older cultures has been hidden by their status systems and by the fact that they had inherited many values from the era dependent on tradition-direction. The European masses simply have not had the money and leisure, until recent years, to duplicate American consumership patterns; when they do, they are, if anything, sometimes more vulgar, more materialistic.

The Europeans, nevertheless, have been only too glad to tell Americans that they were materialistic; and the Americans, feeling themselves *nouveaux riches* during the last century, paid to be told. They still pay: it is not only my students who fail to see that it is the turn of the rest of the world to be *nouveaux riches*, to be excited over the gadgets of an industrial age, while millions of Americans have turned away in boredom from attaching much emotional significance to the consumer-goods frontier.<sup>3</sup>

When, however, I try to point these things out to students who compare Americans with Kwakiutls, they answer that the advertisements show how much emotion is attached to goods consumption. But, when I ask them if they believe the ads themselves, they say scornfully that they do not. And when I ask if they know people who do, they find it hard to give examples, at least in the middle class. (If the advertisements powerfully affected people in the impoverished lower class who had small hope of mobility, there would surely be a revolution!) Yet the advertisements must be reaching somebody, the students insist. Why, I ask, why isn't it possible that advertising as a whole is a fantastic fraud, presenting an image of America taken seriously by no one, least of all by the advertising people who create it? Just as the mass media persuade people that other people think politics is important, so they persuade people that everyone else cannot wait for his new refrigerator or car or suit of clothes. In neither case can people believe that "others" are as apathetic as they feel themselves to be. And, while in the case of politics their indifference may make people feel on the defensive, in the case of advertising their indifference may allow them to feel superior.

In fact, I think that a study of American advertising during the last quarter century would clearly show that the advertising men themselves realize the consumer's loss of emotional enthusiasm. Where once car and refrigerator advertisements showed the housewife or husband exulting in the new possessions, today it is often only children in the ads who exult over the new Nash their father has just bought. In many contemporary ads the possession itself recedes into the background or is handled abstractly, even surrealistically; it no longer throws off sparks or exclamation points; and copy itself has become subtler or more matter of fact. Of course many old-fashioned enthusiasts of consumption remain in America who have not yet been affected by the spread of other-directed consumer sophistication and repression of emotional response. A wonderful example is the small-town Irish mother in the movie, *A Letter to Three Wives*,

<sup>3</sup> Mary McCarthy's fine article, "America the Beautiful," *Commentary*, IV (1947), 201, takes much the same attitude as the text.

whose greatest pride and joy in her dingy railroad-side home is the big, shiny, new, not yet paid-for refrigerator. And it may be argued that even middle-class Americans have only covered their materialism with a veneer of "good taste," without altering their fundamental drives. Nevertheless, the other-directed person, oriented as he is toward people, is simply unable to be as materialistic as many inner-directeds were. For genuine inner-directed materialism — real acquisitive attachment to things — one must go to the Dutch bourgeois or French peasant or others for whom older ways endure.

It is the other-directedness of Americans that has prevented their realizing this; between the advertisers on the one hand and the novelists and intellectuals on the other, they have assumed that *other* Americans were materialistic, while not giving sufficient credence to their *own* feelings. Indeed, the paradoxical situation in a stratum which is other-oriented is that people constantly make grave misjudgments as to what others, at least those with whom they are not in peer-group contact, but often also those with whom they spend much time, feel and think.

To be sure, the businessmen themselves often try to act as if it were still possible to be a Kwakiutl chief in the United States. When they write articles or make speeches, they like to talk about free enterprise, about tough competition, about risk taking. These businessmen, of course, are like World War I legionnaires, talking about the glorious days of yore. Students and many others believe what the businessmen say on these occasions, but then have little opportunity to watch what they do. Perhaps the businessmen themselves are as much the victims of their own chants and rituals as the Kwakiutls are.

Those few students who urge that America resembles Dobu can find little in student life to sustain their view, except perhaps a bit of cheating in love or on examinations. It is rather that they see the "capitalistic system" as a jungle of sharp practice, as if nothing had changed since the days of Mark Twain, Jack London, and Frank Norris. America is to them a land of lynchings, gangsterism, and deception by little foxes and big foxes. Yet, today, only small businessmen (car dealers or furnace repairmen, for instance) have many opportunities for the "wabu-wabu" trading, that is, the sharply manipulative property-pyramiding of the Dobuan canoeists.

If, however, these students turn to social science for their images of power in America, they will very frequently find their own view confirmed. The scattered remarks on the United States in *Patterns of Culture* are themselves an illustration. My students also read Robert Lynd's chapter on "The Pattern of American Culture" in *Knowledge for What?*<sup>4</sup> While noting contradictory exhortations to amity and brotherhood, Lynd emphasizes business as highly in-

<sup>4</sup> Robert S. Lynd, *Knowledge for What?* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1939), pp. 54-113.

dividualistic and politically ruthless; elsewhere he stresses the masterful ambition and conspicuous consumption typified by the older generation of the "X family" of Middletown — though this sedate group would hardly be equated by him with Kwakiutl chiefs. Ironically, the outlook of these and other sociological critics of business is confirmed and reflected by those neoclassical economists who construct models for the rational conduct of the firm — wittingly or unwittingly presenting businessmen as dismally "economic men."

Partly as a result of this image of the businessman, many students at privately endowed universities have become reluctant to consider business careers, and, as more and more young people are drawn into the colleges, the attitudes become increasingly widespread. The abler ones want something "higher" and look down their noses at the boys at Wharton or even at the Harvard Business School. Business is thought to be both dull and disagreeable as well as morally suspect, and the genuine moral problem involved in career choice — namely, how best to develop one's potentialities for a full existence — is obfuscated by the false choice of making money (and losing one's soul) in business versus penury (and saving one's soul) in government service or teaching. The notion that business today, especially big business, presents challenging intellectual problems and opportunities and is no more noticeably engaged in Dobuan sharp practice and Kwakiutl rivalry than any other career, seems not to exist even in the minds of students whose fathers are (perhaps woefully inarticulate) businessmen.

It is likely, then, that the students' image of business, and of American life generally, will have some self-confirming effects. Business will be forced to recruit from the less gifted and sensitive, who will muff their opportunities. People who expect to meet hostility and calculation in others will justify an anticipatory hostility and calculation in themselves.

To be sure, there are plenty of unlovely, vicious, and mean Americans, in and out of business life; plenty of frightening southern mobs, northern hoodlums, dead-end kids with and without tuxedos. There are many cultural islands in the United States where Dobu ways abound, just as there are survivals of late nineteenth-century Kwakiutl patterns. But these islands and survivals do not make a system of power, nor are they linked by any conspiracy, fascist or otherwise.

Now, of course, to show that Americans are neither like Kwakiutls nor Dobuans does not prove they are like Zuni and Hopi Indians. Obviously, in any case, the comparisons must be very rough; from the standpoint of my character types all three tribes, as long as they are in the phase of high population growth potential, would be more or less dependent on tradition-direction. My purpose is to present a parable, not a description. There is evidence, though it is perhaps somewhat understressed by Ruth Benedict, that the Pueblo Indians are actually not so bland and amiable as they seem, that they are, to a degree,

antagonistic cooperators, with a good deal of repressed hostility and envy that crops up in dreams and malicious gossip. But this only strengthens the analogy with the middle-class Americans, whose other-directed cooperativeness is also not completely mild but contains repressed antagonistic elements.

Indeed, the whole emotional tone of life in the Pueblos reminds me strongly of the American peer-group, with its insulting "You think you're big." While the Kwakiutls pride themselves on their passions that lead them to commit murder, arson, and suicide, the Pueblos frown on any violent emotion.<sup>5</sup> Ruth Benedict writes:

A good man has . . . "a pleasing address, a yielding disposition, and a generous heart." . . . He should "talk lots, as they say — that is, he should always set people at their ease — and he should without fail co-operate easily with others either in the field or in ritual, never betraying a suspicion of arrogance or a strong emotion."

The quotation brings to mind the young Vermont new-style political independents whom we discussed in Chapter IX. It also is illustrative of one of the most striking findings from our interviews with young people. When we ask them their best trait they are hard pressed for an answer, though they sometimes mention an ability to "get along well with everybody." When we ask them, "What is your worst trait?" the most frequent single answer is "temper." And when we go on to ask, "Is your temper, then, so bad?" it usually turns out that the interviewee has not got much of a temper. If we ask whether his temper has gotten him into much trouble, he can cite little evidence that it has. What do these answers — of course no proper sample — mean? Perhaps the interviewee is boasting — he wishes he *did* have a temper. But on the whole, my impression is that temper is considered the worst trait in the society of the glad hand. It is felt as an internal menace to one's cooperative attitudes. Moreover, as business enterprise eliminates the men of lean and hungry look, so the peer-group regards temper as faintly ridiculous: one must be able to take it with a smile or be charged with something even worse than temper, something so terrible that no one will accuse himself of it even in an interview — lack of a sense of humor. The inner-directed man may also worry about temper, for instance, if he is religious, but his conscience-stricken inhibitions and reaction formations leave the emotion still alive, volcano-like, within him — often ready to erupt in political indignation — whereas the other-directed man allows or compels his emotions to heal, though not without leaving scars, in an atmosphere of enforced good fellowship and tolerance.

Many young people today also set themselves an ideal in their sex lives not too different from the Zuni norm. They feel they ought to take sex with little interpersonal emotion and certainly without jealousy. The word of the wise to

<sup>5</sup> B. L. Whorf, "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language," *Language, Culture, and Personality*, ed. L. Spier, et al. (Menasha, Wisconsin, Sapir Memorial Publication Fund, 1941), pp. 75-93.



the young — “Don’t get involved” — has changed its meaning in a generation. Once it meant: don’t get, or get someone, pregnant; don’t run afoul of the law; don’t get in the newspapers. Today the injunction seeks to control the personal experiencing of emotion that might disrupt the camaraderie of the peer-group.

The chief worry of the Pueblo Indians is directed not to each other’s behavior but to the weather, and their religious ceremonies are primarily directed toward rain making. To quiet their anxiety the Indians go through rituals that must be letter perfect. American young people have no such single ritual to assure personal or tribal success. However, one can see a similarity in the tendency to create rituals of a sort in all spheres of life. I have found, for example, that when I ask students why they come to class so regularly day after day, why they do not take two weeks off to go somewhere or do something on their own (as they are technically free to do), I receive answers that are mainly rationalizations. For instance, I am told that they must come to class or else they will flunk. But when we examine this allegation, it turns out to be contrary to the evidence: students often get ahead just when they break through the not yet completely bureaucratized routines of university life. It is just this prospect that is frightening. The students feel safer when they are assured of a course of approval from their peers, their antagonistic cooperators, as well as from the adult authorities. They feel safer when they can engage in a common ritual of attendance. Likewise, people make a ritual out of work, out of having fun, out of political participation as inside-dopesters or as indignant, as well as out of countless private compulsions. But the rituals, whether private or public, have usually to be rationalized as necessary; and since this is not self-evident and since the sign of success is not so explicit as a downpour of rain, the American young people can hardly get as much comfort from their rituals as the Pueblo Indians do from theirs.

What does all this mean as an indicator of the way in which a group of young people sizes up the distribution of power and power practices in America? The young people have begun to pass out of the adolescent peer-groups; they have not yet taken their places in the adult patterning of American life. What will be the effect of the discrepancy in their seeing the United States as a place led by Kwakiutl chiefs, leading Kwakiutl-style followers, when they themselves have set their feet along the “Hopi Way”? Will they seek to bring about changes, through social and political action, that will make America more comfortable for the tolerant, other-directed types? Or will they seek to adopt more ruthless, Kwakiutl-like behavior as supposedly more compatible with real life? Or, perchance, will they admit that *they*, too, are Americans, after all not so unique, which might require a revision of their images of power, their images of what Americans in general are like?

Doubtless, all these things can occur, and many more. But there is perhaps

one additional factor which will shape both changing ideology and changing character. The students, aware of their own repressed competitiveness and envy, think that others may try to do to them what they themselves would not dare to do to others. The society feels to them like Kwakiutl or even Dobu, not only because that is the ideology about America they have learned but also because their own cooperativeness is tinged with an antagonism they have not yet completely silenced. And perhaps this gives us another answer to our puzzle about tolerance in the previous chapters, when we asked why, if the other-directed person is tolerant, he is himself so afraid of getting out of line? It may be that he feels his own tolerance precarious, his dreadful temper ready to let fly when given permission; if he feels so irritable himself, no matter how mild his behavior, he must fear the others, no matter how amiable they, too, may appear.

This may be simply a way of saying that the transition from inner-direction to other-direction is not complete — possibly, can never be complete.

Perhaps neither my students nor the authorities they read are representative. Perhaps the "Zuñification" of America is more widely recognized than I think. In any event it is significant that these students would prefer to live in the Pueblo culture, if they had to choose among the three described by Ruth Benedict. And, while this choice is in itself not to be quarreled with, the important fact is that they do not know that they already are living in such a culture. They want social security, not great achievements. They want approval, not fame. They are not eager for talents that might bring them into conflict; whereas the inner-directed young person tended to push himself to the limit of his talents and beyond. Few of them suffer, like youth in the earlier age, because they are "twenty, and so little accomplished." Whereas the inner-directed middle-class boy often had to learn after twenty to adjust, to surrender his adolescent dreams and accept a burgher's modest lot, the other-directed boy never had such dreams. In a profound sense he never experiences adolescence, moving as he does uninterruptedly with the peer-group, from the nursery years on. He learns to conform to the group almost as soon as he learns anything. He does not face, at adolescence, the need to choose between his family's world and that of his own generation or between his dreams and a world he never made.

Since, moreover, his adjustment to this group reality begins earlier, it becomes more a matter of conforming character and less a matter of conforming behavior. The popular song, "I don't want to set the world on fire," expresses a typical theme. The Kwakiutl wanted to do just that, literally to set the world on fire. The other-directed person prefers "love" to "glory." As Tocqueville saw, or foresaw: "He willingly takes up with low desires without daring to embark on lofty enterprises, of which he scarcely dreams."

There is a connection between the feeling these students and other young people have about their own fates and the contemporary notions of who runs

the country. We have seen that the students feel themselves to be powerless, safe only when performing a ritual in approving company. Though they may seek to preserve a factitious emotional independence by not getting involved, this requirement is itself a peer-group mandate. How, then, as they look about them in America, do they explain their powerlessness? Somebody must have what they have not got: their powerlessness must be matched by power somewhere else. They see America as composed of Kwakiutls, not only because of their own residual and repressed Kwakiutl tendencies but even more because of their coerced cooperativeness. Some big chiefs must be doing this to them, they feel. They do not see that, to a great extent, it is they themselves who are doing it, through their own character.

The chiefs have lost the power, but the followers have not gained it. The savage believes that he will secure more power by drinking the blood or shrinking the head of his enemy. But the other-directed person, far from gaining, only becomes weaker from the weakness of his fellows.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Compare the inner-directed and the other-directed college student. Which do you consider yourself?
2. What are the chief characteristics of Kwakiutls? Compare to American businessmen.
3. How strongly, in your opinion, is the young, college-educated American influenced by advertising?
4. What does Riesman have to say about the recruiting of future American businessmen? Do you think this is valid?



## EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE

### America's Next Twenty Years

Peter F. Drucker

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The most important economic event of the last few years has gone almost unreported in the newspapers. Few carried any announcement that well over four million babies have been born in this country every year since 1954 — the largest baby crops ever. Yet 1954, 1955 and 1956 should each have brought a record low in births rather than a record high. For the young women who reached marriageable age, married, and had their first child during these years were born, for the most part, in the dark depression years of 1933 and 1934, when the birth rate ran 30 or 40 per cent below the present figures. The number of marriages since 1954 has indeed been smaller than usual, but the total married population has had more than the usual number of children.

Between now and 1975 the number of young people reaching marriageable age will tend to increase. Since romance is reliably constant, this means an appreciable increase in the rate of family-formation and in the number of births to be expected each year. Six or eight years from now the birth figure should take another mighty leap upward as the children born in the years of the "baby boom" since 1942 begin to reach maturity and form families of their own.

What now appears to be true, therefore, is that the low birth rate of the depression decade was a freak. The higher birth rate which reasserted itself in the early forties now appears to be the normal rate at which the American people reproduce themselves. Only about ten years ago the Census Bureau, misled by the depression figures, predicted that the American population would become static within a few years and start to decline soon thereafter. It was this interpretation which underlay most of the talk about a mature economy that played such an important role in American public policy during the thirties and early forties. But now we can say with some certainty that nothing short of a

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tremendous catastrophe — that is, an atomic war — could possibly stop or even slow down the growth of the American population for the next twenty years.

The reason we can be so certain, of course, is that in reckoning the adult population for the next two decades we do not have to predict; we know. *The major events that determine the future have already happened — irrevocably.* Everybody who will reach marriageable age during the next eighteen or twenty years has by now been born. Everyone who will join the work force within the next eighteen or twenty years has by now been born. And so, obviously, has everyone who will retire. The economic population of the next twenty years — its numbers, its age and sex distribution — is not just predictable today; *it is already in being.*

This chapter examines some of the implications arising from the single stupendous fact of today's birth rate. As in any prophecy, there will presumably be some boners — but with a difference. Our forecasting is severely limited to those future happenings that are already under way. There is no need for crystal-gazing. We can find plenty to occupy us in what we *know* about America's next twenty years from events that have already occurred.

#### MORE JOBS THAN WORKERS

We start with a paradox: there are going to be more people, and hence more jobs, but not more people to fill the jobs. It is more than possible, in fact, that a continuing feature of the next two decades will be a labor shortage — and that the basic problem of the period will not be unemployment but inflation. Let's look at some of the figures which show why this is true.

The total population of the United States, now at 168 million, can be expected to top 190 million by 1965 and 220 million by 1975. These are conservative assumptions. They make full allowance for a continuing drop in the birth rate in the one major sector of the populace where it is still high, and still dropping: the Negro. They allow for several years of birth rates as low as those of the thirties. They hardly take into account at all the fact that ten years hence the number of young people old enough to start their own families will be very much larger than it is at present. And they do not make allowances for any growth in the size of families. If the three-child family again becomes the norm, of course, as against the present average of two-and-a-half, the growth of population will be much faster.

The rate of population growth which the figures anticipate is no larger than our rate of growth for the past fifty years, including the thirties. It is the rate of population growth which has prevailed in this country virtually since colonial days, and which has brought about the steady doubling of the American people every half century. But the total number of new Americans this rate will add to our population is now exceptionally large. It took forty years — from 1910 to

1950 — for America to grow by 40 million people. Now it should take less than twenty years.

At the same time that the total population will grow very rapidly, however, the *working population* will grow very slowly, if at all. With total population increasing by 25 million, the number between twenty and sixty-five years of age (the bulk of our working population) will go up at the most by 5 million. In the group from twenty-five to forty-five — the one from which every employment manager in the country prefers to choose — there will actually be a slight shrinkage. On the other hand, there will be 5 million more people over sixty-five, and at least 16 million more under twenty, than there are today.

From 1965 on, total population and working population should be in better balance. Beginning in the early sixties, the large baby crops of the forties will reach maturity. Population of working age will thus increase by 12 million or so during the decade 1965–75. And assuming that there is a slight drop rather than an increase in the birth rate of the families these grown-up children form, the subsequent increase in total population and in working population will stand in the same ratio (five to two) in which they stand today.

#### EXPLOSION IN THE COLLEGES

But the size of the working population is not entirely determined by the number of people of working age. An important factor is the number who are not available for work because they are in school.

If the birth rate was the most important economic event of the last few years, the second most important was the steady increase in the number of full-time and part-time college students. This began with an increase of 10 per cent, to an all-time high of 2.5 million in 1954. Since then — in only two years — the figure has risen to 3 million or more. The increase in the birth rate was contrary to all expectations; the increase in the number of college students is nothing short of miraculous. Not only have an abnormally low number of young people reached college age during the past years (the delayed result of the lean thirties), but the veterans studying under the GI Bill have all but disappeared. Seven or eight years ago, three quarters of the male students in many undergraduate colleges were GIs; today the figure is down to 10 or 15 per cent, most of them in the older classes. Yet the 1954, 1955 and 1956 jumps were in the freshman class, which contained almost no GIs and was drawn from the smallest college manpower reservoir of the recent past or the foreseeable future.

It had long been clear that the mid-fifties would show whether there had been any real change in the educational habits of the country, or whether the GI Bill (and the attempt of many young veterans to make up for lost time) had just created a temporary bulge in college enrollment. A drop of one third during these years would have been mild; indeed, it would still have supported the conclusion that going to college was rapidly becoming the normal thing to do.

That there has been an *increase* rather than drop is thus overwhelming proof that — far from being a freak — the jump in college enrollment is another new normal. The college enrollment figures now show exactly the same trend that high school enrollment showed after World War I, when a high school education first became normal throughout the country.

Twenty years from now, at least 7.5 million and perhaps as many as 12 million young people can be expected to attend colleges and universities. Therefore, even though they are of working age, they will not be available for full-time work. Such a projection is again a conservative one; 12 million college students will still be less than half the young Americans of college or university age. Yet within a similar period — from the early twenties to the early forties — the number of young people in high school increased from a little under 20 to close to 90 per cent.

Such a substantial gain in college enrollment would come none too soon. For our problem is not the breeding of an “intellectual proletariat” for whom there will be no jobs, but a need for more trained and educated man- and woman-power than the country can possibly supply. Indeed, as we will see in a subsequent chapter, the technological revolution of Automation, already under way, requires a tremendous increase in the number of trained and educated people. Already the short supply of such people is *the major limiting factor* on the rapid growth of our economy and of our principal industries. We need not worry, therefore, about our ability to absorb these millions of college-trained people; we have to worry principally about increasing their number and quality fast enough.

The explosive growth of college enrollment will create many problems some of which will be discussed later in this book. It certainly raises the most serious questions of educational policy, curriculum, and educational standards. It makes me wonder whether the colleges, especially the independent liberal arts colleges, really know what they are doing in their fund-raising and other campaigns. If I were a college president I would not — as so many seem to be doing — lower educational standards in the belief that this is the way to draw more students. I would try instead to raise standards, so as to make my college known for the quality of its education and the toughness of its academic requirements. There will be students aplenty.

What concerns us here, however, is merely the impact of this development on the size of the working population. We can expect that there will be only 2 million more men and women available for work in 1965 than there are today — that is, an increase of 5 million of working age minus an increase of 3 million in college attendance. And, of the 12 million who will be reaching working age between 1965 and 1975, 5 million may go to college rather than straight to work, leaving a net increase for the second decade of only 7 million.

Finally, the size of the working population must also be adjusted for time

at work. There can be little doubt that total hours worked will continue to decline as a result of longer vacations, more holidays, and a shorter work week. The American people have made it thoroughly clear that they have decided to take, in the form of greater leisure, a big slice of any increase in productivity.

*Here, in summary, is the basic population structure within which the American economy will function during the next twenty years:*

There will be a population increase of one-fifth *in the next ten years*.

But total population of working age will increase only by one-tenth.

Population actually available for work will increase only by 6 per cent.

And total hours worked by the whole economy in the course of one year *may not increase at all*.

*And in the next twenty years*, total population will increase by at least two-fifths.

Population of working age, however, will increase by less than one-third.

Labor force will go up by one-fifth, and total hours worked by 10 per cent.

And even more intensive employment, on a larger scale, of older people who are willing and able to work — however desirable in itself — would not materially affect these conclusions.

These statements define a trend exactly opposite to that which dominated the twenties and thirties. Then, partly as a result of the drop in the birth rate and partly because of the cutting off of immigration, the population of working age tended to grow faster than the total population. We face the exact opposite, in other words, of the basic assumptions that underlay Keynesian economics; and the basic problem of economic policy in the two decades ahead should therefore not be unemployment but inflation.

#### A DIFFERENT KIND OF DEPRESSION

The supply of people to do the work, and of hours to do it in, will in fact be so short as to make any prolonged period of large-scale national unemployment highly improbable. This does not mean that we shall have no depression, or even that a depression is unlikely (though the constant new demands created by a rapidly growing population can be expected to act as a substantial cushion). It also does not mean that there may be no serious and chronic unemployment in any one industry, or in one area dependent on a decaying industry — as there is today in the Pennsylvania anthracite fields. But though depressions — even serious ones — may well happen, depression unemployment of the kind that characterized the thirties is unlikely. ...

Lest this be considered incongruous, if not silly — for we have come to consider the two words “depression” and “unemployment” as interchangeable — let me refer only to Soviet Russia, where for the past thirty years there have been violent and extreme economic fluctuations without unemployment; and where, though for entirely different reasons, there has been a labor shortage



much like the one we are about to experience. What form such a depression-without-unemployment might take may be suggested by our experience from 1946 to 1949, when the three quarters of the working population who were not unionized (and were therefore not protected against inflationary price increases) suffered a cut in their real purchasing power fully comparable to the impact of a severe and prolonged depression. Even with high employment, inflation could have the same kind of destructive effect over the next twenty years.

Now, there is only one effective way to control long-range inflationary pressures, and that is increased productivity. Certainly it is the only way to convert inflation from a serious threat of economic and social disruption into an opportunity for economic and social advance. As one of several consequences of the population revolution, therefore, *increased productivity* will be the paramount need of the American economy in the decades ahead.

Mr. Ralph J. Cordiner, the president of General Electric, announced at the end of 1954 that by 1965 his company would have to produce and sell twice the volume of goods it had turned out that year with only 11 per cent more people on its payroll. Adjusted for the expected decrease in working hours, this means that eight years hence General Electric must be able to produce twice as much as in 1954 for every hour its employees work.

This is a sharper increase in both production and productivity than the overall economy will have to show, for the electrical industry is growing a good deal faster than the national average. But even for an industry that grows only as fast as the nation at large, the increase ahead will have to be tremendous. A company that intends to maintain its competitive position in its own industry will have to be able, ten years from now, to produce two-fifths more than it does today without much, if any, increase in its hours worked. Twenty years hence it will have to be able to turn out twice as much with only one-tenth more hours of work.

Put it in another way. Today every American at work supports himself (or herself) and one-and-a-half other people besides. Twenty years from now every American at work should produce enough to support, at today's standard of living, himself and three-and-a-half other people. And he will have to do this in fewer working hours.

This assumes, moreover, that the standard of living will only go up at the same rate it has been advancing for the past twenty-five years, half of which were years of depression and war. To achieve this — hardly an ambitious goal — productivity will, however, have to increase 40 per cent in the next ten years; it will have to be almost doubled in the next twenty years.

Despite all the emphasis we have given to productivity in recent years, we really know very little about it — and we certainly do not know how to measure it. But even if we take the most optimistic of the various guesses about the rise in productivity in the past few years — a guess that puts the net annual increase

above 3 per cent — we are going to have to step up the rate considerably to make possible increased growth.

#### PAYING FOR PRODUCTIVITY

The first requirement is capital. We may not know much, but we do know that an increase in capital investment and an increase in productivity are tied together; and the higher the capital per worker the higher the productivity — and, incidentally the wages and salaries paid.

By 1955 we were spending \$40 billion a year on capital investment. A good many economists consider even this tremendous sum to be too low; they feel that we have not yet made adequate allowance for the inflation of the forties, and they point to the fact that a good many businesses (especially the small ones) still base their provision for future new equipment on the deflated prices that prevailed in the thirties. These economists feel that in three major areas of the national economy we have an over-age plant which needs more capital investment than it gets: in housing, in transportation, and above all in education. They feel, too, that in many industries the machinery is rapidly wearing out and that American equipment, far from being modern, might well — in important respects — be on the verge of obsolescence.

But let us assume that \$40 billion in capital investment are adequate for the needs of the 1957 economy. We would then need \$65 billion a year in 1965 and at least \$100 billion twenty years from now. To obtain such gigantic sums would not be easy under the best of circumstances. To make matters worse, as a later chapter will point out, the large investment trusts and pension funds are currently emerging as the country's only real "capitalists"; and this development by no means encourages the supply of that kind of capital.

But there is another and more important question: can the nation afford investment at such a rate? Today eleven cents out of every dollar produced in this country is put back into capital for the future. To obtain an adequate amount in 1975, however, we would have to put back fifteen cents out of every dollar. Eleven cents is already high — higher than we have ever plowed back except in wartime. Fifteen cents may be wholly impossible, except under such stringent government control of interest rates or installment buying as would be considered unbearable — and rightly so.

We must, if this is the case, find ways to obtain more productivity for our investment dollar than we do today. If new investment is to be kept at or below 10 per cent of national product, we must learn by 1965 to get as much additional productivity out of \$55 billion per year as we now would get out of \$65 billion — as much, in 1975, out of \$70 billion as we now would get out of a \$100 billion. We must, in other words, increase the productivity of capital itself by one-sixth by 1965 and by one-third during the next twenty years.

This is not a new problem, to be sure. Economic progress might even be

defined as the process of continually obtaining more productivity for less money. The means to achieve this is *innovation*. Without constant innovation, that is, all the capital invested in this country since 1750 might have been barely enough to permit the present population to live at a 1750 scale of living; the entire improvement in living standards since then is the result of innovation. Innovation has been the real "frontier" of the Western world these past two centuries. And what now distinguishes an "underdeveloped country" — and *keeps* it underdeveloped — is not so much a shortage of capital as it is shortage of innovation.

#### THE CHALLENGE TO INNOVATE

To the layman — and the typical businessman — "innovation" means "research" or "engineering," new products or new productive processes. These are indeed important aspects of innovation; and the four-fold increase (from \$1 billion in 1950 to \$4 billion in 1955) in the sums spent by American business on research and engineering for new products and new processes is therefore a highly encouraging sign. We already know that the next twenty years will bring about major changes in manufacturing, amounting to a technological revolution. And we also know that in a major industry like housing we badly need both radically new products and much more efficient production. But it is a serious mistake to think of innovation exclusively as technological innovation. The most important area of innovation — and the most productive one — may well be the opposite of technological.

During the past ten or fifteen years, the innovations that have had a major impact on the American economy were nearly all non-technological, were nearly all innovations in something else than product or process. First among them stand the tremendous changes in distribution methods. Hardly less important, especially in its impact on productivity, has been the development of new concepts of business organization. There have been tremendous innovations in plant, store, and office architecture; similarly in respect to the management of worker and work, whether industrial engineering, human relations, or personnel management. Finally there is the emergence of new basic management tools, especially measurements and controls like budgets, cost accounting, production scheduling, and inventory controls.

Among the major innovations of the past ten or fifteen years, only one can even remotely be called an innovation in product or productive process. That is the development of systematic and organized methods of materials handling. Otherwise, in their aggregate, the basically non-technological innovations have had a greater impact on the American economy, and have contributed more to the increase in productivity in this country, than all technological innovations of the past ten or fifteen years. In the long view of history, it is for social inventions — and not technical ones — that Americans may be best remembered.

During the period ahead, in any event, the greatest need for innovation seems

more likely to lie in the social than in the technological area. Indeed, the technological revolution itself will be totally unproductive unless it is accompanied by major innovations in the non-technological field. Among them, above all, is again innovation in marketing. Equally badly needed are innovations in methods, tools, and measurements for doing the managerial job in the modern enterprise, large or small; for the development of competence, skill, and imagination among managers (still considered a luxury by many companies) is probably the greatest necessity any business, let alone the economy, faces. Finally, the need is for effective innovation in the management of workers and in the organization of work; despite the progress in this area, it may well be the most backward sphere, and the one with the greatest potential for increased productivity.

Compared to electronics, rocket engines, or synthetic chemistry, these are unglamorous subjects. They are rarely discussed except by professional managers, and not as often as they should be, even so. Yet our success at innovating in these four areas may well decide whether the population revolution, which has already taken place, will be an opportunity for further growth and strength, or whether it will prove a strain, a burden, and perhaps even a threat to social and economic stability.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Why was the high birth rate of the last few years unexpected?
2. Explain: "there are going to be more people, and hence more jobs, but not more people to fill the jobs."
3. What happened to college enrollments after the G.I. Bill "bulge"?
4. What form might a "depression-without-unemployment" take? How can such a depression be avoided?
5. Why is capital investment (plowing back profits) necessary in business? How can innovation to some extent take its place?

Nathan M. Pusey

## The Exploding World of Education

*Nathan M. Pusey, twenty-fourth President of Harvard University and the first non-New Englander to be elected to this position, is a strong believer in the liberal arts college. He considers it "essentially . . . a teaching community . . . the place where young people make the transition from the family to political society." He implemented these beliefs during his tenure as President of Lawrence College (Wisconsin), 1944-53, from which he was called to Harvard. Pusey was born and brought up in Council Bluffs, Iowa. He received his B.A. (in English), M.A. and Ph.D. (in Greek) from Harvard. A fellow college president called Pusey "the most brilliant young teacher" he had ever known.*

To ask anyone in the field of education to look twenty-five years ahead and consider the future goals of U.S. schools and colleges is to invite the creation of another utopia. The educator may dream and ask some idealistic questions. Will the social standing of teachers be improved by that time? Will they be paid what they are worth? Will the general public have acquired an increased respect for learning, especially humanistic learning? Will the people have become bold defenders of free inquiry?

One can hope for a day when a large number of the ablest college graduates every year will choose to become teachers. One can hope for a time when basic science will command more, not less, respect than technological application; when professional schools will turn out educated men and women with full awareness of the broadest reaches of their work, and when scientists and others will once more be able to communicate with each other around the globe, free from the restrictions that mark our troubled times. In that new day neglected studies of areas like Asia and Africa will take their proper place in the school and college program. The humanities, with their power to illuminate the spirit of man, will be held in no less esteem than the natural and behavioral sciences. More people will speak and understand the tongues of their fellow men. Informed and interested teachers and students will dispassionately but eagerly debate ethical and religious questions. The arts will flourish in society — and perhaps people may even still read books. The educator hopes that he is not day-dreaming.

### THE CLOSEMOUTHED YOUNGER GENERATION

The effects of education are released slowly, as if by a time fuse, so that the true character of a particular educational endeavor is seen only after the passage of years. The most that we can really know about the next quarter-century is

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that by 1980 a considerable fraction of the leadership of the country will have passed to men and women who are now coming out of the colleges and professional schools. One thought should give special pause to all educators: we shall not know fully until 1980 whether our contemporary educational effort has been good.

My personal conviction is that recent generations of college students have been at least as able and as serious in college as their predecessors. They have not said much. To some of the older generation their general behavior has seemed excessively relaxed and casual. They have not been especially eager to bestow trust in people or in principles. Certainly they have not been impressed by pretensions to virtue on the part of anyone — political leaders, writers, or even teachers. But beneath a surface manner they seem to me to run as deep as many earlier generations — and they may well be wiser. Most college graduates enter upon their adult careers resolved to work for a better world. Perhaps this generation, precisely because it is relatively unencumbered with illusions about human behavior, will be inclined to persist longer in such constructive effort. If so, it may be that by 1980 there will be a little less crassness, bombast, bigotry, and ill temper in the world, a little more disposition to be reasonable, than has sometimes been true in the past.

#### OUR EDUCATIONAL ASSEMBLY LINE

American education has been in a process of rapid development since its beginning. Since 1870 the most conspicuous occurrence has been the development and spread of the comprehensive high school, the aim of which, now almost realized, is to draw into its care the whole of an age group. This was a major revolution, and like all revolutions was attended by much heated discussion.

A few people, like those whose distorted ideas lead them to inveigh against the use of United Nations materials in schools, have gone so far as to see a sinister plot underlying the revolution. Others with equal vehemence now cry out that there is a conservative counterrevolution. Claims and counterclaims are made in books, articles, and speeches attacking U.S. schools and colleges from both sides.

At the bottom of much of this contentiousness can be found a failure to recognize that our American educational scheme, designed to provide for all, or most, of the members of an age group, must sometimes suffer in comparison with a program designed for a small, highly selected, and carefully prepared clientele. In most European countries today, for example, fewer than fifty out of every thousand young people go on to higher education — and these only after careful distillation by a long process of rigorous training and competitive examination. In the U.S., on the other hand, we are already approaching the time when one out of every four young Americans will go on to some kind of

college. With all its shortcomings and difficulties, there are considerable advantages in our practice — especially for a democratic, technological nation.

Most of us went to a public school, quite unaware at the time that we were participating in a revolution. It is startling now, however, to note that between 1890 and 1952 the proportion of the age group attending high school rose from 3.8 per cent to 65.3 per cent, the numbers in the public high school from less than 203,000 to nearly 7,700,000 and the number of high schools from a few thousand to almost 24,000. It is not surprising that during this time the curriculum underwent expansion and diversification, and that the old so-called “college preparatory course” was found unsuited to the enormous new spread in interests and abilities.

Now many Americans are beginning to wonder if the movement to extend the period of formal education for “all American youth” is to be pushed further to include the college experience. It is clear we have already taken substantial steps in this direction. In 1900 less than 5 per cent of those of college age went to college; their numbers were only 230,000. By 1930 there were about one million students enrolled in colleges. Today there are 2,500,000 in college and this is expected to double within the next fifteen years. It is very possible that before the end of the century one out of every two Americans will insist on “going to college.” \*

Meanwhile we hear frequent assertions that too many young people are enrolling in college and, indeed, there is something faddish in the way many are swept on from high school into an experience for which they are poorly prepared and have no heart. It is difficult to refute the charge that there are people in college who make too little use of their opportunity. But it is also true that there are many young people qualified for college who do not attend, and that many who begin poorly in college come alive as they go along.

#### A CERTAIN INEVITABILITY

Since the end of World War II, few communities have escaped the burden of building additional elementary schools and increasing their teaching staffs. Though this task is still far from completed, today the urgent need is for more high-school classrooms and teachers. Within three more years the problem will have engulfed the colleges.

Merely to maintain the present quality of college education it will probably be necessary to double the number of college teachers within the ten years from 1960 to 1970. We may have to duplicate the existing physical facilities that have been acquired slowly during three hundred years. The cost of this will be many billions of dollars (one estimate: \$15 billion). It is not surprising if leaders in

\* The statistics on those “going to college” today include an astonishing array of institutions; four-year liberal-arts colleges, two-year junior colleges, art schools, technical institutions, schools that mix courses in general education with professional and vocational courses in a variety of proportions.

education seem sometimes to stand disconcerted before this prospect, or to speak with confused voices, wondering where an answer is to be found.

The difficulties will not be over by 1980, for the road to which we are committed will still be broadening before us. Not then, any more than now, shall we be able to turn back from the vastly expanded educational operation to which we are being carried not only by the pressure of increasing population (76 million in 1900; by 1980 over 200 million), but also by technological advances. These advances continue to come at an accelerating pace. The process, based on the multiplication of scientific knowledge that is shaping our world, begins in education and, in turn, feeds on and demands more education. Thus there is a certain inevitability, a kind of compulsion, governing the development of education in America. As we look at the expanding technological future we should rejoice to be going ahead; but we may be excused, too, if at times we become quizzical about the end.

Whatever their professed aims in the past, colleges have usually been pathways to economic advance for those who attended them. It is statistically true today, for example, that the person who attends college may expect to earn upwards of \$100,000 more during his lifetime than the one who does not. At present more than ever before our national life is motivated by economic calculations, and at the same time the expanding technology has contributed to making education almost unashamedly vocational. Applied science has created a technological society and, along with it, an almost insatiable demand for more and more recruits with more and more specialized, and technical, education. Industry tells us that 30,000 newly trained engineers are required each year to keep our machine society running. Obviously the vocational pressures on higher education, always formidable, will increase.

#### IF INDUSTRY MEANS IT

But today it should be transparently clear to all that our first need is less for specialists than for widely diffused wisdom and reliability in society. This means that specialized technical knowledge and the broad understanding and moral purpose historically associated with liberal education can no longer be kept separated. Nor can liberal education be ignored or held to be of slight importance. The demand for the professionally trained — engineers, doctors, teachers, administrators — does not slacken. But reports and demands coming into the colleges indicate that some search is being made for more people who, beyond minimum professional requirements, can be counted upon also to bring to their tasks imagination, human understanding, a sense of adventure, integrity, devotion, and an awareness of where their activity fits into larger wholes.

Thus one of our primary needs is to join liberal and professional education, or at least see to it that the latter is deeply penetrated by the former. Both kinds of education are needed by society and in public life. It will not be sufficient



merely to pay lip service to liberal education, or to have its praises sung by people who do not understand or fully trust it. If industry really means what it says about searching increasingly for liberally educated professionals, then it is looking for men and women who have been exposed to the lessons of industry, to the insights of poetry — perhaps even to art! — and to the questions and convictions of philosophy and religion. Among them will be found those professional men and women, morally rooted, who are able to see their contributions in relation to the contributions of others, and who will have learned to acknowledge a wide range of relevances both in their own lives and in society.

The character of our education has changed with our society. Wasting time in lamenting the passing of an earlier, more restricted, more “classical” period is of little profit. It is not likely again to be possible, nor in my judgment would it be wise, to try to cut back or restrict the numbers of those who are permitted to make what they can of the advantages of formal education, beyond high school. Education has the urgent responsibility, not yet adequately acknowledged, to provide both an opportunity for many and an exacting test for those who can run a faster race and want to go further than their fellows.

It is a truism that the continued growth in quality of civilization depends less on numbers (even numbers of engineers) than on fresh insights, extraordinary efforts, and novel achievements by a few individuals of exceptional ability who, having received the necessary exacting training, are encouraged to go beyond average attainment. Thus, although our future educational practice must make place for large numbers, it is of even greater importance that we now turn more seriously to the additional task of developing an exciting and demanding kind of formal education, designed fully to draw out the ablest members of each age group. This is the most difficult problem confronting American education in the next quarter-century. For it is the exceptional person — one might almost say the eccentric person — who all along has been opening the way toward a fuller life for all of us. We ignore him at our cost.

#### WANTED: GOOD TEACHERS

If the educational experiences that lead to development in individuals are to become more effective, one must begin by strengthening the quality of teaching. Devotion, knowledge, imagination, quick intelligence, patience, concern for others, awareness of beauty, grasp on principle, attractive personality — these are the great qualities that make creative teachers.

Thus a major problem confronting education is to attract more such people — to find them, prepare them, and encourage them to stick at the task.

Classrooms in which there are teachers with no exceptional gifts are places merely to keep young people, not to educate them. The absence of vitalizing personal qualities in the education process is more deeply and tragically injurious than a thoughtless adult world has yet been ready to recognize. Injury is done

in terms of stunted, frustrated, and twisted personal lives. But there is also social injury. When a student's imagination is not stirred, or when he merely suffers through schools, he not only fails to develop whatever potential may be in him, he is actually being prepared to join those who are indifferent or hostile to the claims of intellect. Their numbers, always too large, impose a heavy drag on every effort to advance.

#### ALMOST FORGOTTEN PROFESSION

We have not yet been sufficiently aroused to do much about the waste that goes on in our classrooms. Nor shall we effect improvement so long as society continues to place such relatively slight value, measured in salary and prestige, on the services of teachers. During the past twenty-five years the salaries of teachers in colleges, measured in terms of stable purchasing power, rose about one-sixth as much as the rise of per capita income measured in the same way. Parents today complain of the current "high" cost of higher education; yet the rise in per capita income in this country in recent decades has been roughly three times as great as the rise in college tuition. The effect of this disparity on the teaching profession is all too apparent.

There are 70,000 school districts in the U.S., and approximately 1,800 institutions of higher education. Virtually all of them are having difficulty in finding enough teachers. Many communities are beginning to take steps to improve the standing and economic condition of teachers. These efforts must be multiplied and accelerated. Efforts already made in a number of colleges to interest more young people in the teaching profession must be intensified. From the demonstrated readiness of able young people to respond when the teaching career is fairly described to them, there is reason to hope that — bad as the situation has looked and still looks — the number of good teachers can and will be considerably increased.

And more effective and imaginative ways must be found to prepare them to teach. It is not a superabundance of technical courses that makes a good teacher. The chief requirement is a bright and energetic individual who continues to be deeply affected by educational experience. . . .

#### SERVANT AND CRITIC

In the end, then, we return again to the liberally educated teacher, who is, of course, a competent professional, but who must also be something more — a person of exceptional quality. The teacher's special job is to nurture in young people the desire to extend themselves, and to help them, with their minds and wills, to grow beyond competence into full humanity. Society has cared less for such teachers than it might, and has done too little to find their successors. It is to be hoped that by 1980 there will be, in all colleges and schools, more of

those men and women whose lives and values will creatively touch our children's lives, and our own.

Education is society's servant but also her tireless critic, for no civilization is ever worthy of worship. Values of crucial importance for human beings are always getting lost, or getting obscured and undervalued, in the workaday world. A complete education has a responsibility to do more than "serve society." It has to save us from ourselves.

#### QUESTIONS

1. List some improvements in education which the author hopes for.
2. What is the chief distinguishing characteristic of American education?
3. Characterize the present generation of college students. What hope do these traits suggest for the future?
4. What percentage of increase (of staffs and facilities) will be necessary to accommodate the college enrollment of 1970? How much will this cost?
5. How and why must more college students be attracted to the teaching profession? Describe the ideal teacher.

**Douglas Bush**

## The Humanities

*Professor of English at Harvard, John Nash Douglas Bush is a specialist in the literature of the Renaissance and author of a number of scholarly books in this field: Mythology and Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (1932), The Renaissance and English Humanism (1939), Classical Influences in Renaissance Literature (1952), and others. Professor Bush was educated at the University of Toronto (B.A., 1920, M.A., 1921) and Harvard University (Ph. D., 1923). The second half of "The Humanities," printed in the New York Times Magazine under the title "Education for All Is Education for None," provoked a lively controversy.*

No one would ever speak of "the plight of the natural sciences," or of "the plight of the social sciences," but it is always proper to speak of "the plight of the humanities," and in the hushed, melancholy tone of one present at a perpetual death bed. For something like twenty-five hundred years the humanities have

From *The Educational Record*, January, 1955. By courtesy of the author and the publishers. (An address delivered at the Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Council on Education.)

been in more or less of a plight, not because they are themselves weak, but because their war is not merely with ignorance but with original sin; and as civilization has advanced, the means of stultifying the head and heart have multiplied in variety and power. As a sample of cultural leadership, or of a common attitude, I should like to read a declaration of faith delivered some years ago by the chairman of the department of humanities in a well-known technological institution. We will call him Professor X. This is most of the report, from the *New York Times*, of his speech to a convention of engineers:

Professor X . . . asserted last night that it would be "morally wrong" for him to advise the reading of the literary classics in this fast-moving age of television, radio and movies. . . .

One should read for the purpose of doing something with what one reads, he asserted: not of polishing one's mind like a jewel, but of improving the world around.

Take up a book because it will tell you something of the world . . . ; read what you want to read, not what you think you should read. "This is the frame of mind that makes reading worthwhile and often deeply rewarding.

"For example, it would be morally wrong of me to urge you to take up a classic like 'David Copperfield' and to settle yourselves in easy chairs for winter evenings' reading. If you tried 'David Copperfield' you would grow restive, you would think of all the other things you might be doing more consistent with your daily environment — looking at television, listening to the radio, going to the movies.

"Moreover, you would wonder why you should spend so much time laboriously reading 'David Copperfield' when you could see the book as a film, should it return some time to the neighborhood movie." . . .

"The single prescription for adult reading," he added, "should be to read something different, something that will change your mind. Herein lies compensation for the loss of the purely reflective life."

Engineers are not, to be sure, in common repute the most cultivated branch of mankind, but did even they deserve such counsel, and from such a source? The humanities, as I said, have always had to contend with the crude urges of the natural man, with his resistance to higher values than his own, but the speech I just quoted from reminds us of the many new ways there are of escaping from active thought and feeling into a state of lazy collapse, of passive surrender to unthinking action or external sensation. Many people would endorse our oracle's view that one should not read to polish one's mind like a jewel but for the sake of improving the world around. The humanistic tradition has always stood for improvement of the world, but it has always insisted that a man must make himself worthy of such an enterprise; one of our perennial troubles is that improvement of the world is undertaken by so many unpolished minds. Then our touching faith in machinery is illustrated by the quaint assumption that a movie is the same thing as a great book. And that *Ersatz* doctrine extends down through television to the comics, which have now joined the march of mind by reducing literary classics to capsule form. That sort of thing, by the way, was done, and done much better, a dozen centuries ago, and has been commonly

labeled a symptom of the Dark Ages. But this is only a reminder; there is no need of enlarging upon such powerful elements in our popular civilization. The opposition to such elements comes from the humanities.

Negative terms, however, are not enough. The "humanities," in the original meaning of this and kindred words, embraced chiefly history, philosophy, and literature. These were the studies worthy of a free man, that ministered to *homo sapiens*, man the intellectual and moral being, and not to *homo faber*, the professional and technical expert. And these, with divinity, completed the central circle of human knowledge and understanding. Divinity went overboard long ago; history, which once was literature, is now a social science; and philosophy, though still grouped with the humanities, has become a branch of mathematics. Thus in common usage the humanities mean literature and the fine arts. That is an unfortunate narrowing but we may take things as we find them and concentrate on literature, which is central and representative.

One plain fact nowadays is that the study of literature, which in itself is comprehensive and complex, has had to take over the responsibilities that used to be discharged by philosophy and divinity. Most young people now get their only or their chief understanding of man's moral and religious quest through literature. Anyone who has been teaching literature for twenty-five or thirty years, as I have, can testify to the marked change there has been in the spiritual climate during that time. (A rigorously scientific colleague of mine, in psychology, will not permit the use of the word "spiritual," but I use it anyhow.) I am speaking mainly of the higher order of college students, but it would be hard to imagine even the better students of twenty-five or thirty years ago reading Dante and George Herbert and Milton and Hopkins and Eliot with the real sympathy that many now show. For the more intelligent and sensitive young people of today, and there are very many of that kind, are a serious and a conservative lot. They not only live in our unlovely world, they have no personal experience of any other. They are aware of hollowness and confusion all around them, and, what is still more real, of hollowness and confusion in themselves. They feel adrift in a cockboat on an uncharted sea, and they want a sense of direction, of order and integration. And in literature they find, as countless people have found before them, that their problems are not new, that earlier generations have been lost also. Most of the young people I see find in literature, literature of the remote past as well as of the present, what they cannot find in textbooks of psychology and sociology, the vision of human experience achieved by a great spirit and bodied forth by a great artist.

I apologize for elaborating what may be called clichés, but those familiar lists of courses in catalogues make one forget that the frigid label "English 10" or "French 20" may represent an illumination and a rebirth for John or Betty Doe. Not that courses are the only or even the main road to enriched experience and sensitivity, but they are one road; and a teacher can help as a guide or

catalyst. Josiah Royce is said to have complained that a philosopher was expected to spiritualize the community. The modern philosopher is expected only to semanticize the community; the other function, as I said, falls upon the teacher of literature. I do not of course mean inspirational gush. I mean that teachers, conducting a critical discussion of a piece of great literature, necessarily deal not only with the artistic use of words and materials but with the moral and spiritual experience that are its subject matter. That is why, as President Pusey has said, the humanities must be the cornerstone of a liberal education. Naturally teachers will have their methods under constant scrutiny, but their material, the world's great literature, can hardly be improved; all it needs is a chance to work upon responsive minds and characters.

While I cannot guess the temper of this gathering, and while all the administrators present may, for all I know, regard the humanities as a pearl of great price, that is not their general reputation. Administrators are commonly said to prize the solid and tangible virtues of the natural and social sciences and to look upon the humanities as a nice luxury for the carriage trade. How far that general reputation is true or false I wouldn't know, but, just in case it has a modicum of truth, I have been insisting that the humanities are not a luxury; they are the most practical of necessities if men and women are to become fully human. The humanities commonly suffer in esteem because they do not lend themselves to statistical reports of achievement. You cannot demonstrate with graphs and charts that John or Betty Doe, through reacting to a piece of literature, became a person of richer moral and imaginative insight, of finer wisdom and discrimination and stability. For the experience of literature is an individual experience, and nothing that is really important can be measured.

When we look at the American education scene, the diversity of standards is so great that generalizations about this or that part of it may be violently contradictory. At any rate educational history of the past fifty years seems to furnish a pretty good forecast of the bad effects of the deluge to be expected in the next fifteen. In school, college, and university, the results of the huge increase in the student body suggest that the principle of education for all, however fine in theory, in practice leads ultimately to education for none. An editorial in the *New York Times* of September 13, 1954, takes the usual line of defense. The principle of education for all, it says, forces us "to accept the principle, also, that the function of education is primarily social and political rather than purely intellectual." "It cannot be denied," the *Times* proceeds, "that this means a down-grading of the learning process. We are adjusting to an 'average' that must be spread so widely that it comes down automatically. Education is no longer the intellectual privilege of the gifted few. It is held to be the democratic right of all." The *Times* does go a little beyond this orthodox assent to express uneasiness over the sacrifice, in elementary and secondary schools, of quality to quantity.

To mention one of many results, there has been an appalling growth of illiteracy at all levels, even in the graduate school. (Somehow stenographers are still literate, even if their collegebred employers are not.) At every orgy of Commencements one wonders how many of the hordes of new bachelors of arts can speak and write their own language with elementary decency, or read it with understanding. After all, the polished mind is suspect, whether in a student, a professor, or a Presidential candidate. And illiteracy, and contentment with illiteracy, are only symptoms of general shoddiness.

Obviously one main cause of this state of things has been the sheer pressure of numbers, along with a deplorable shrinkage in the number of qualified teachers. But the situation would not be so bad as it has been if the downward pressure of numbers had not been powerfully strengthened by misguided doctrine and practice. The training of teachers and the control of school curricula have been in the hands of colleges of education and their products, and these have operated on principles extracted from John Dewey's philosophy of barbarism. (If that phrase seems unduly harsh, I may say that I have in mind Dewey's hostility to what he regarded as leisure-class studies; his anti-historical attitude, his desire — intensified in his followers — to immerse students in the contemporary and immediate; and his denial of a hierarchy of studies, his doctrine that all kinds of experience are equally or uniquely valuable; and it would not be irrelevant to add his notoriously inept writing.) The lowest common denominator has been, not an evil, but an ideal. The substantial disciplines have been so denuded of content that multitudes of students, often taught by uneducated teachers, have been illiterate, uninformed, and thoroughly immature. There is no use in priding ourselves on the operation of the democratic principle if education loses much of its meaning in the process. When we think, for instance, of education for citizenship, which has been the cry of modern pedagogy, we may think also of the volume and violence of popular support given to the anti-intellectual demagoguery of the last few years. Mass education tends to reflect mass civilization, instead of opposing it. Even if education were everywhere working on the highest level, it would still face tremendous odds.

The great problem has been, and will be, first, the preservation of minority culture against the many and insidious pressures of mass civilization, and, secondly, the extension of that minority culture through wider and wider areas. The rising flood of students is very much like the barbarian invasions of the early Middle Ages, and then the process of education took a thousand years. We hope for something less overwhelming, and for a less protracted cure, but the principle is the same; Graeco-Roman-Christian culture not only survived but triumphed, and with enrichment. If we think of our problem in the light of that one, we shall not be disheartened but recognize both as phases of man's perennial growing pains.

Throughout history it has been a more or less small minority that has created

and preserved what culture and enlightenment we have, and, if adverse forces are always growing, that minority is always growing too. In spite of the low standards that have commonly prevailed in public education during the last fifty years, I think the top layer of college students now are proportionately more numerous than they were thirty years ago and are more generally serious and critical. There is a growing nucleus of fine minds, and teachers are concerned with the enlargement of that all-important group. At the same time, without retreating from that position, one wonders what it is in our educational process or in our culture at large that often causes a liberal education to end on Commencement Day.

I have no novel and dramatic remedy for the evils that have shown themselves so clearly already and will become more formidable still. But I might mention a few things of varying importance which do not seem utopian. Of course I represent no one but myself, and I cannot even say, like a member of the House of Lords, that I enjoy the full confidence of my constituents.

In the first place, I see no reason why the flood of students should be allowed to pour into college, why automatic graduation from school should qualify anyone for admission. We ought to recognize, and make people in general recognize, that a desire for economic or social advantage, or for merely four years of idle diversion, is not enough. Under such pressure as is coming, surely the state universities have the strength to set up bars and select their student body, instead of admitting all who choose to walk in the front door and then, with much trouble and expense, trying to get rid of some through the back door. Doubtless such procedure would require a campaign of enlightenment and persuasion, but legislators always have an alert ear for the cry of economy, and the public must be convinced that higher education, or what passes for that, is neither a birth-right nor a badge of respectability, and that useful and happy lives can be led without a college degree. As things are, we have an army of misfits, who lower educational standards and increase expense, and no branch of a university staff has grown more rapidly of late years than the psychiatric squad.

Secondly, many people have grounds for the belief that the multiplying junior colleges can and will drain off a large number of the young who for various reasons are unfitted for a really strenuous four-year course. Junior colleges, however, should not be recreational centers for the subnormal.

Thirdly, I think the need for formal education beyond high school would be much lessened, and the quality of both secondary and higher education obviously improved, if the colleges and universities, getting the public behind them, made a concerted and effectual demand that the schools do their proper work and do it better than a great many schools have been doing it. Quite commonly, a distressing proportion of a college course now consists of high school work. We have grown so accustomed to a battalion of instructors teaching elementary composition to freshmen that we take it as a normal part of college education,



whereas it is a monstrosity. Imagine a European university teaching the rudiments of expression! If high school graduates are illiterate, they have no business in college. For a long time, and for a variety of reasons, we have had slackness all along the line; somehow, some time, strictness and discipline have got to begin.

Increased enrollments have almost inevitably led to increased reliance upon large lecture courses. There are administrators who assume that there is no limit to the effectiveness of a lecture course except the size of the auditorium, and there are also teachers who see positive virtues in lectures and can themselves display them. Perhaps because I never remember anything I hear in a lecture, I do not share that faith. I favor classes small enough to allow discussion, and that is expensive. But there are possible economies that would be highly desirable in themselves. We do not need to maintain the naive doctrine that there has to be a course in anything in which anyone ever has been or might be interested. Many catalogues list courses that can only be called fantastic, and I don't think I am guilty of partisan prejudice if I say that these are rarely found among the humanities. If we had fewer and less specialized courses, and if we did not have our armies of composition teachers, a considerable number of man-hours would be released for smaller classes.

One thing that has suffered grievously and conspicuously in this last generation has been the study of foreign languages. The usual reason given is again the pressure of numbers, the numbers who are not going beyond high school, but again a positive reason has been open or quiet hostility. Languages have been pretty well crowded out of the school curriculum, and of course there has been a corresponding decline in college study. Nothing has been commoner in recent decades than the applicant for admission to a graduate school who has had little or no acquaintance with any foreign language except possibly a year or two of Spanish. Serious study of a foreign language means work, and a first principle of modern pedagogy has been the elimination of work. Thus, during the years in which we have all become conscious of one small world, and in which this country has become the leader of that world, educational theory and practice have retreated into cultural parochialism. There is no need to argue how necessary for the ordinary citizen is some knowledge of a foreign language and a foreign people. In the last few years a good many parents have been aroused, and the Modern Language Association has been putting on a vigorous campaign, so that progress has been made; but there is a long way to go. It is encouraging that in some cities successful experiments have been made in the teaching of languages in elementary schools, where, for good psychological reasons, they ought to begin. I wish there were something encouraging to be said about the ancient languages, but we are concerned with actualities.

Finally, since I touched on the large number of young people who are in college and shouldn't be, I might mention those who are not and should be,

and who may be lost in the oncoming flood. Educators and others are more conscious than they once were of our failure to recognize and foster promising students who cannot afford college, and increasing efforts are being made in that direction; but we are still very far behind England, where bright students are picked out at the age of ten or eleven and brought along on scholarships. If we spent on exceptional students a fraction of the time and money we have spent on nursing lame ducks, there would be a considerable change in the quality of education.

One last word on a different matter. Like everything else, the Ph.D. has been cheapened by quantitative pressure, and it might be earnestly wished that it were not a union card for the teaching profession. There are plenty of young men and women who would be good teachers without such a degree, and the degree itself ought to mean something more than it does. Along with that may go another earnest wish, that both administrators and members of departments would abandon the principle of "publish or perish." Socrates would never have had a chance at an assistant professorship.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by the term "humanities?" What is their value?
2. Explain "education for all . . . leads ultimately to education for none."
3. Does everyone need a higher education? Does every college teacher need a Ph.D.?
4. What "first principle of modern pedagogy" has resulted in the decline of foreign language study? Are languages more or less needed than they used to be?
5. What is the author's opinion of the freshman composition course? Do you agree?

*"A student of cultural history" Jacques Barzun calls himself. Now Professor of History at Columbia University, Barzun received his early education in his native France, emigrated with his family to the United States after World War I and completed his studies at Columbia, graduating at the head of his class in 1927. His lively contributions to cultural history include Romanticism and the Modern Ego (1943), Berlioz and the Romantic Century (1950), and God's Country and Mine (1954). Teacher in America, said a grateful critic, is "one of the few volumes on education by which no intelligent reader can be bored."*

"Examinations make us pale" sing the boys in a translation of an old medieval student song. The lads probably do not know when they are well off. They hear that many colleges now run without examinations and as youngsters emerging from twelve years of quizzing, they cheer inwardly. What they do not know is that once admitted to college they will undergo a "battery of tests" — that is the accepted phrase — they will be mown down by it, and classified accordingly. At entrance, probably, the student comes tagged with an I.Q. picked up somewhere, like vaccination. The college gives him another rating by means of the Thorndike Test, which is a rather sensible general-information and aptitude test; and in truly sensible places the score obtained on it is treated very casually, as an index of merely probable success in studies. Later, in the freshman year, the battery begins its work. Someone in the Psychology Department is studying hunger in young North American males — so two hundred guinea pigs paying fees starve under supervision. The study shows that the majority became irritable after three days and fell on hamburgers when released.

But the vocational experts are also at work and they administer a test of a beautiful simplicity. You check off on a printed form the things you like to do, read, see, and talk about. Answers are counted up by groups, and since the cunning designers have given the same list to five hundred successful persons in each of fifteen professions, by comparing the degree of similitude among answers, it is possible to discover whether you are more like a farmer than a real-estate man of equal eminence. Sometimes the student is allowed to see the list of notables originally taken as a "control group," and the young poet or musician finds that he has been "measured" against syndicated versifiers and tin-pan-alley composers.

Of course no validity is claimed for the test. I have yet to find a test which its maker backs heart and soul as performing what it seems to perform. The

usual formula is that the results show high correlation with some other test, or with Phi Beta Kappa lists or with Who's Who. In other words, persons in one college are, *as a group*, very much like persons in other colleges or in the professions, or in honorary societies. But the impression given the taker of the test is that he has been individually rated and given "scientific" advice about his vocation. Being a naive youth, he still thinks his choice of vocation as individual a matter as his prescription for eyeglasses, and he finds no more comfort in the generality of the test result than he would in a pair of lenses ground according to an "average" prescription.

But the tests continue to rain down: they measure the depth of information pumped into him, they try to predict medical, legal, engineering aptitude, they delve into emotions, characterize social and other background, classify political "temperament," in short, attempt to decant personality into small bottles. I recall visiting a friend shortly after he was made Dean of a respectable country college. He showed me "the plant" and explained the system. In his office, I looked at files and records, and noticed that on the back of the card bearing each student's name, address, and marks, there were stamped a number of symbols, like this: —

CON	COO	OPT	FAM	SEX	WOR	NER	PHY
40	20	31	22	60	55	62	31

"Is it fair for me to ask what this means?" I inquired. My friend laughed. "I can't answer you. It's a relic from my predecessor. He received a grant of money from a foundation if he would allow the student body to be tested, for the better guidance of deans. The thing was done by a visiting psychologist. Now he's gone and nobody seems to know how to interpret the records." The secret was as tantalizing as the cipher in Poe's *Gold Bug*, but all we could "deduce" was that COO and SEX seemed to diverge very strangely in amount.

Doubtless this test was a variant of the original free-association test, by which when the tester says "Black" and you say "White" — or something else — the time and the nature of the response become of diagnostic value. Free association is also stimulated by ink blots, passages of fiction, and pictures. One "research" organization administers this and other tests to adults who feel they are miscast in their present job and want advice. They are not given precise directions, but are told that they are "subjective" or "objective" and that certain professions go best with each type. The distinction really comes down to the famous — and less pretentious — one made by Gelett Burgess between Bromides and Sulphites.<sup>1</sup> But this would-be human engineering (a phrase in actual use) goes on to measure aptitudes; it finds a type which it calls the Too-Many-

<sup>1</sup> *Are You A Bromide? or, The Sulphitic Theory*. New York, 1906. "The Bromide does his thinking by syndicate. He follows the main-traveled roads, he goes with the crowd. In a word, they all think and talk alike — one may predicate their opinion upon any given subject. They follow custom and costume, they obey the Law of Averages." (Pages 17-18.)

Aptitude Person; and in testing its own tests, it takes alarm at any sign of high correlation between one aptitude and another, for that must imply a single aptitude branching into a seeming difference.

I restate these beliefs in some detail because they bear on the school situation and on our intellectual life at large. Apparently since "science" has taken over testing, no one any longer believes in Intelligence. The reason seems to be that the first intelligence tests proved useless; so refuge has to be taken in the weasel idea of aptitudes. The difference between the two is that an aptitude is a single quality that stands behind special skill, whereas Intelligence sends out current into any performance. The very nature of intelligence is adaptability, and it is this general quality which modern schools, modern tests, and modern life systematically neglect in favor of robot "aptitudes."

The excuse for doing so is slight but real. In the first place, an industrial world thinks it wants only a pinch of intelligence to season a great plateful of mechanical aptitudes.<sup>2</sup> In the second place, though intelligence is and always will exist as a general power, it appears nowhere in full perfection. The man who can solve differential equations probably hits his thumb with the hammer at every stroke. Physical and emotional barriers keep intellect from shining like a bright light in all directions. Hence psychologists, noting the dark bands of interference, imagine separate entities which they name aptitudes. They ought perhaps to remember how widely "gifted" most children are, both physically and mentally, and although observers may later find versatility reduced, they should still assume a center of unspecialized mental force.

Teachers should not only assume it but work on it, for it atrophies if unused. Darwin has told us how his taste for poetry passed away as he specialized, and everyone can note in himself the loss of comparable powers. We may be reconciled to it as a sacrifice for greater ends, but we must not forget that they are *powers*, no less than sources of pleasure. Every college should therefore be dedicated to Intellect — not in the sense of pedantry, or verbalism, or highbrow superiority, but in the sense of Mind, free and restless in its desire to experience, comprehend, and use reality.

If that is desirable, then tests of the kind I have described should go. They are an insult to Intelligence, except when played with as parlor games. And something else must go at the same time; I mean the *form* of such tests. Every man of education ought to take a solemn vow that he will never "check" anything on a printed list. Students should not be asked to pass so-called objective examinations, which are the kind composed of mimeographed questions to be marked Yes or No, or to be solved by matching the right name with a definition.

<sup>2</sup> It should perhaps be said that in certain exceptional cases, usually cases of abnormality, the tests show that a watchful eye should be kept on a particular student. But a college that maintains a good counseling system and teaches freshmen in small classes would get the same information from its staff without the test. Minnesota tried out the tests on a really heroic scale and concluded that their interpretation for use required men of great insight giving their whole time to the task — which is what the tests were supposed to make unnecessary.

I have kept track for some ten years of the effect of such tests upon the upper half of each class. The best men go down one grade and the next best go up. It is not hard to see why. The second-rate do well in school and in life because of their ability to grasp what is accepted and conventional, the "ropes" of the subject. They become pillars of society and I have no quarrel with them. But first-rate men are rarer and equally indispensable. They see into situations quickly, and with the fresh, clear eye of Intelligence, and they must be encouraged to continue. To them, a ready-made question is an obstacle. It paralyzes thought by cutting off all connections but one. Or else it sets them thinking and doubting whether *in that form* any of the possible answers really fits. Their minds have finer adjustments, more imagination, which the test deliberately penalizes as encumbrances.<sup>3</sup>

This basic difficulty occurs no matter how carefully the questions are drafted and how extensive their coverage. I sat and worked on a committee that prepared objective questions in history for the so-called Graduate Record Examination, which is now widely used to test college seniors' readiness for graduate work. In committee, it was revealing to see how a question that seemed "fool-proof" and "obvious" to two or three men, thoroughly trained in their field, struck others of the same caliber as "ambiguous" or "misleading." Add modifiers and you make the question so unwieldy that it can hardly be grasped at one reading; simplify and you reduce it to bare common fact. Neither extreme, moreover, brings anything *out* of the student's mind; yet the power to relate, to think up, to see into, is what distinguishes the first rank from the second in all walks of life. The results of the Graduate examination no doubt correlate very satisfactorily with other indices, but they scarcely give data for the most needful kind of diagnosis. Nor have they ever been tried on the masters of the profession, which would be the test of tests, provided running comments were allowed. When one courageous man proposed just this at an institution that thrives on endless testing, the idea was dismissed as a joke in poor taste. One can understand why some satirist, disbelieving in the integrity of teachers, defined the type as "a kind of moral mermaid."

In some progressive schools all tests have been abolished. This might look like a solution, were it not that examinations are a necessary and important part of instruction. In saying this I am not arguing from the practical need to give students marks. I refer to the student's need to learn how to jump hurdles. When I say this to a class that has just groaned and stamped its feet at the announcement of a test, there usually arises a spokesman of the Shattered Nerve brigade. He offers to tell me all I want to know, if only it can be done orally and

<sup>3</sup> On looking over a regular section of the Thorndike Test, I find this type of question: "Below are blank spaces marked with the initial letter *h*. Opposite are ordinary words like *leather*. Write in the blank spaces the name of something made of leather and beginning with *h*, such as *harness*." My eye goes to the third word, which is *water* and I am stuck: I can think of *hydraulic*, *hot tea*, and even "*hice*," but of no proper answer. Since the test is against time, the mental gears are very likely to jam for good.

not on paper. I accept and usually find that my bodily presence does not help him organize his knowledge, whatever may be the effect on his nerve. The fact is that the examination-shy are like fence-shy horses: they have been trained badly or not at all.

Examinations are not things that happen in school. They are a recurring feature of life, whether in the form of decisive interviews to pass, of important letters to write, or life-and-death diagnoses to make, or meetings to address, or girls to propose to. In most of these crises, you cannot bring your notes with you and must not leave your wits behind. The habit of passing examinations is therefore one to acquire early and to keep exercising even when there is a possibility of getting around it.

In the lower schools, one has, or used to have, the excellent practice of daily recitation. The pupil stands up and speaks before the class. Excess of it is dull, but used in moderation it is the proper start of a training which should end with frequent oral examinations and public speaking in college.<sup>4</sup> Is it not evident that every doctor, lawyer, teacher, engineer, architect, business executive, should be able to think on his feet and talk about his subject? I should except only dentists, whose crowning merit is golden silence.

Written examinations should produce brief impromptu essays on questions fairly fully outlined by the examiner. At the end of a course, examination questions might well be taken from a list previously handed to the student. The list resumes the whole course and the choice of two or three questions from it removes the hazard of grading answers which the student avers he "just didn't happen to remember." If possible the written examination should be short — two hours at the most — and the questions should fill it more than full; the aim being to test the student's knack of outlining essentials, subordinating detail, and keeping a sense of proportion. Minds so drilled will be less likely later on to tell long pointless stories, but such a training will take place only if the examiner makes clear what he expects and why.

Four written tests a year should be enough if supplemented with orals every time some natural sequence of subjects is completed. At present, most colleges consider the end of a semester to be the closing of an era in the student's development.<sup>5</sup> He is through with that. The past is sacrosanct and no one inquires into it. Very occasionally there is imposed a cumulative "exit" examination at the end of the four years, a useful device, but an unfair one if the student has never

<sup>4</sup> Much might be written on the status of public speaking in our colleges, some of which maintain elaborate courses for teaching the subject in a thoroughly educational fashion. Yet it seems to appeal to but few students, doubtless because of old unhappy associations with debating and oratorical contests. Two separate things seem to be needed: one, a compulsory course, carrying no academic credit, for students with bad voices and vulgar speech habits. Girls especially should be forced to lower pitch, loosen the throat, and untwist their lips, so that a roomful of them should no longer sound like an aviary on fire. Second, an elective course for students whose future profession requires the ability to speak coherently and pleasantly.

<sup>5</sup> Harvard has a well-worked-out system of departmental and divisional examinations, both oral and written, which is applied in the student's third and fourth years.

met an oral test before, a foolish one if he must neglect his last months' work in order to cram, an inadequate one if it is confined to his major subject. College subjects intercommunicate at many points and should be tested orally by a group of well-selected examiners. This last is important, because much of the candidate's nervousness comes usually from the questioner's own shilly-shallying; and also because it is possible to quiz a person for an hour (too long by half for a college student) without eliciting any very conclusive information.

Yet there is the necessity of concluding by giving marks. These used to be numbers, on the basis of ten or a hundred. More generally now, they are letter-grades, A, B, C, and F, ornamented with plus and minus signs to signify intermediate levels. I need not point out — or rather, current abuses compel me to point out — that a marking system should be as far as possible uniform. Marks are a convention, a language agreed upon and therefore to be respected. Differences of judgment are inevitable but they must not be affectations, as when a teacher announces that *for him*, B+ is the highest grade. How would he like his creditors to say that *for them*, a five-dollar bill is worth only four? It is absurd to say that marks are unimportant and that real students should disregard them. Cruel nonsense! If marks are important enough to make the Dean expel a man from college, they are important, very important, to the man running that risk — not to mention their linkage with Phi Beta Kappa, honors, scholarships, and even with the silly harangue of the man who set a ceiling at B+. I put in the same class the markers who decide ahead of time how many A's, B's, and C's they will give, regardless of the quality of the men before them.<sup>6</sup>

As might be expected, the progressive schools will have nothing to do with marks. Most of them repudiate examinations. The teacher being a daily observer of his relatively few students is supposed to know how well they are doing, and anyhow, not to judge them with one another, but each in relation to the fulfillment of initial talents. He is said to measure "growth." What he knows, he is asked to consign to elaborate reports written in his own words. This sounds plausible but it is in reality quite mad. For there are only two possibilities: either the teacher writes "Satisfactory," "Good steady work," "Excellent performance" — which is a simple evasion of the letter-grade system; or else he turns into an amateur novelist. He writes, that is, a character sketch of John or Nellie. And in this sketch he struggles with shadows; he explains the inexplicable. The student's "growth" has been retarded by this emotion and pushed forward by that. Her work shows too theoretical an interest, or relies too much on immediate perceptions; it is out of focus . . . With what? For whom? How do you know? The teacher has really lost his footing by abandoning the idea of a common standard. He may write half a page of vague and accidentally true descrip-

<sup>6</sup> This is statistics misunderstood; in France, logic misunderstood works the same kind of injustice. If five men are tied for a "First" in mathematics, the next man, with a score one point less than the top, gets a "Sixth" and since ratings matter tremendously, he is penalized out of proportion to his ignorance.



tion, but how is the student to fit it in with another teacher's half page? Ordinarily, the day after reports are sent out, every office hour is taken up by interpreting their language to the students — and it winds up with "You're doing all right" or "You'd better work a little harder."

Supplementing this fictional effort, there is filed also a printed form asking the teacher for particular answers about the student's work. This is to enable the progressive school to hold intelligible converse about its pupils with institutions distrustful of free-hand portraits. The printed form calls for comparisons with other students and with standards in force elsewhere. The answers are given by ticking off "Below average," "Average," "Good," "Superior," and so on. But some forms are worse than others. I have one at hand, issued by an art school, which consists of ten sheets of different colors, all asking such questions as these bearing on the student's Taste: —

Does its character arise from aptitude or need or focus of consciousness based on experience?

Is it constant or fluctuating?

How is it related to contemporary social configuration of accepted taste?

Needless to add, the responsible progressive colleges have never gone so far as this, but "reports" are still one of their weak points. They do not say what students, parents, other colleges, want to know; the students contribute nothing to them in the form of work written under standard conditions; and it is not a rare occurrence for the faculty to suspend classes for a week so that each instructor may compose in the sweat of his face a series of twenty or thirty "profiles" which have not the merit of being either scandalous or true.

The facts support a conclusion, with a moral. The conclusion is that unless we recognize Intelligence as the general quality I tried to define, we shall all bog down in a morass of ill-defined virtues, aptitudes, and accomplishments. The only yardstick fit to measure an Intelligence with is another Intelligence. Written and oral work supply a basis for making that judgment common to all those who want or need to be rated. If it is argued that this is not "objective" or "scientific," I reply that objectivity applies, as its name suggests, to objects; and that science cannot help us classify the things we care about when we enter the realm of the mind. When it attempts classification, it achieves something other than it intended. And in any case, science is not to be invoked merely by using words like "focus" and "configuration." Letter or number grades do not yield perfect justice, it is true, but neither do they put fantastic, bombinating ideas into people's heads. Wherefore the moral is: half a loaf . . .

QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between intelligence and aptitude? How well can these be tested?
2. What kind of course examinations, if any, should be given to college students? State your opinion, and Barzun's.
3. Should grades be given? What alternative does Barzun mention? Can you refute Barzun's arguments in favor of traditional grading?



RECREATION

John Lardner

Which Sport Has the Greatest  
Appeal?

*John Lardner, son of Ring Lardner, is a leading sports writer and columnist for Newsweek. He is also the author of several books, and during World War II served as war correspondent in both the Pacific and European theaters. His style has been called "crisp and convincing . . . the general effect is picturesque and animated."*

One winter in the Nineteen Thirties, Mike Jacobs, the late sports promoter, introduced the game of contract bridge in Madison Square Garden. He had just failed with the Cuban game of *jai alai*, at the Hippodrome. "They's no interest in *jai alai* around here," Mr. Jacobs said, after counting the house easily on his teeth (of which, at that time, he had by no means a full set). "What do the people like in this town, besides boxing?" "Bridge," said a wealthy friend of his, so Jacobs introduced bridge as a big-time spectator sport.

He hired the Four Aces, then a famous card troupe, to play a series of matches in the Garden. To show the customers what was happening, play-by-play, by magnification, Jacobs had live stooges impersonate the cards (as in "Alice in Wonderland") and walk or hop across a raised platform in the center of the arena, trumping and finessing each other as required by the play of the experts. I remember that there was a good deal of discontent among the stooges, some of whom were vice presidents of Mike's Twentieth Century Sporting Club.

From *The New York Times Magazine*, October 24, 1954. By courtesy of the author and publishers.

Mushky Jackson, one of the vice presidents, was a 9-spot, and Mushky McGee, another official, was an 8, and both thought their years with the firm entitled them to be jacks, or better.

"How do the customers like it?" Jacobs asked the box office by telephone, on the second day of the matches. "What customers?" said the box-office man, and the idea of public bridge was abandoned.

I mention this forgotten chapter in history because it brought the number of different sports I've watched in my time, professionally and otherwise, to forty-three. These include lawn bowls, court tennis, Australian-rules football, cricket, cockroach racing, badminton, weight-lifting, lacrosse, curling and yacht racing. Yacht racing was the thirty-fourth or the thirty-fifth. Like all the others, it has its faults as a spectacle. I was told that it is best watched by airplane. Watching part of a race to Bermuda, from the air, I heard an interpreter in the plane say, "That's the sloop Rainbow" — or it may have been Seagull — "passing Ambrose Light." But twenty minutes later, it seemed more likely that Ambrose Light was passing the sloop Rainbow. And that condition, I learned in time, is the very essence of yacht racing.

I've even seen an honest wrestling match, which is something not many living Americans can say. That is, an honest professional wrestling match — there are plenty of honest amateur matches, of course, in schools, colleges and the Olympics; and very good sport they are, too, for the few aficionados who can appreciate them. The reason professional wrestlers almost never wrestle honestly, for the mass audience, is that the good pros know technique too well: competing on the level, they can frustrate each other all night, like chess masters. The action in honest pro wrestling is just as wild as in chess. As a boy, I saw Hans Steinke and Stanislaus Zbyszko wrestle honestly in a hall in Great Neck, L.I. At 10:45, when my family took me home, without resistance, the pachyderms had moved once in half an hour — when Steinke's nose twitched.

There are, when all's said and done, only a handful of spectator sports which make the general public's blood, and the gate receipts, flow like sap in the springtime. You've heard fierce arguments given for each of them as the best. For this spectator, none of the others can match baseball. I know that this opinion, like most opinions, will never be universal. It probably can't be sold, for instance, to the Maharajah of Jaipur, a courteous young Prince with whom I saw a ball game from a box at Yankee Stadium a few summers ago.

"How do you like it?" I asked him, halfway through the fourth inning.

"Quite well," the Maharajah said. "How do you reach a cab stand from here?"

I gave him directions — and the next thing I knew, the Maharajah, followed closely by his vizier who had come to the game with him, was headed for a cab stand.

Granted there are things about baseball that can be improved. They'd better

bring back the spitball, or widen the plate (as Ford Frick, the baseball Commissioner, suggested a few years ago), or drain the kangaroo blood out of the ball, or do something of the kind to relieve the terrible strain on pitchers, which is the main cause of the lengthiness of the game today, when par for nine innings is nearer three hours than two. They might stop playing night baseball, too, which is impairing the eyes, digestions and general efficiency of the players. I speak as one who is not in baseball to make money. But, a good many club owners tell you they are not in baseball to make money, either — and, if so, why don't they ship those lights back to Broadway and play only by day, when the game is at its best? If it's argued that people have a hard time getting to watch afternoon entertainment in this age, who is it that is jamming the race tracks in the afternoons?

There are some other needed changes. They might throw out that new rule which requires the players to bring their gloves to the dugout with them between innings and makes each inning a minute or two longer. They might try to have the ball parks conform more nearly in size and shape and length of foul lines. They might attempt a more equitable distribution of player strength, sending Roberts, Spahn, Lemon and Antonelli to Brooklyn, so that a faithful fan like your correspondent can win a bet on his team, instead of being looted by yahoos and philistines.

There's no intention here to claim that big league baseball is the perfect spectator's game. But, even as it stands, I think it excels all others. Its basic construction is both sound and imaginative — wise observers from abroad, after being exposed for a while, are impressed, for instance, by the theory of the force-out; the wisest of them also like the intentional base on balls, and I think they're right, though a few fans yammer against it as unsporting, missing the point of tactical aptness and ingenuity of the play. Baseball provides a unique combination of team play and individual performance. It excels in color, setting and movement.

Still, before I can consider a case for baseball as made, I realize that I've got to do some eliminating among the other forty-two spectator sports I've attended, man and boy. The popular prejudice in favor of a few of them is astonishing.

Take, briefly, what might be called back-and-forth goal games. The forte of such games is supposed to be a steady flow of movement. But the fact is that two of the most popular of them, football and basketball, as played today, come with a built-in stall, or sputter. The ratio of stall — of arbitrations, repairs and adjustments — to movement runs anywhere from ten to one to fifteen to one. Football is fun to play — just as litigation would be a popular participant sport, if there were no lawyers' fees. But for the spectators, if they were unprejudiced, a leaky faucet would make better watching than a football or a basketball game.

A few back-and-forth games, such as hockey, tennis and soccer, have managed to avoid the stall factor. So has water polo, where the fouls are committed out of sight. But in these games, the constitutional flaw of all back-and-forth sport is seen the more plainly for lack of interruption: sameness. Their patterns are too limited to compete for attention with the range and variety of baseball, or with the human improvisations of boxing. I say this in the full knowledge that several hundred million people around the world think soccer is wonderful. I don't know what's got into them.

Take horse-racing, which is a spectator sport only in the sense that its patrons look hard at their mutuel tickets from time to time. The races are watched or followed almost exclusively through the track's public-address system, which can also be heard in the paddock, or the bar. Remove betting from racing, and you will have a game for connoisseurs, like billiards. And you will get the same size crowd as you get at billiard matches.

To enjoy horse-racing, the general spectator needs to have at least one parimutuel ticket in his pocket. To enjoy other kinds of racing games — track, swimming, skiing — he needs the help of a watch, or a tape-measure. In track, the original element of spectator interest, the competition between runner and runner, to see which gets there first, has withered and died. Ask yourself, what kind of an impression would the so-called Miracle Mile — the race at Vancouver, B.C., last summer, between Roger Bannister and John Landy — have made on the local audience and the world at large if the two stars had run to a tight, driving finish in 4 minutes 10 seconds and 4 minutes 10.6 seconds, respectively? The race would have been a turkey. Its whole success lay in the fact that both men — and I submit that it made almost no difference to the world at

#### SPECTATORS

According to the most recent compilation of sports attendance by Triangle Publications, Inc., which has compiled such statistics for seven years, horse-racing is the nation's leading spectator sport. In 1953, 49,747,992 people watched the thoroughbreds and trotters while 37,680,686 attended major and minor league baseball games.

The best estimates of 1953 attendance figures for other spectator sports are as follows:

Football .....	15,280,939
Wrestling .....	4,000,000
Yachting .....	3,000,000
Basketball .....	2,683,235
Track and Field .....	2,500,000
Hockey .....	2,425,816
Soccer .....	1,500,000
Tennis .....	915,000
Boxing .....	856,980
Dog Shows .....	255,000

large which of them won — whittled infinitesimal amounts of white space from stop-watches at a point just short of 4 minutes.

Has the sports ideology of the ancient Greeks come to this, that the spectators get their kick out of a contest several minutes after it's over, when five or six men in badges and business clothes have had time to study and compare five or six watches? Well, yes, it has. I won't deny that clock-and-tape-measure sports seem to appeal to large numbers of people. But I think these people could stimulate themselves just as successfully by timing their own pulses, or by reading thermometers.

Patient, far-ranging spectators like your correspondent have occasionally investigated crew racing, that is, races between eight-oared rowboats. Personally, I've even participated in this sport — and while it is far and away the most painful of all participant games, I believe rowing itself is preferable to watching rowing — if, I mean, you want to know what is happening. Crew races can only be watched *in toto*, by the average spectator, from trains that move sporadically along shorelines. Every car is a lounge — or bar-car, and considerable sleeping is done, though not in berths — but to know who's ahead, you have to listen to a stranger at a microphone, if the microphone is working.

Golf, also, is a sport which commands a mobile audience, a self-propelled one. The golf audience is severely limited, not only by the fact that few people nowadays enjoy taking long, cross-country walks, just to look on, but by certain considerations which are not widely appreciated: a golf gallery must be seeded and carefully strained off from the mass of potential spectators to leave those who will (1) shut up and (2) keep their hands off the players. Golf being the one major sport in which players and watchers share the arena, self-restraint by the public is vital. To know how rare this quality is (I don't say superior, merely rare) it's necessary to have seen a big golf match played before a heterogeneous, or non-golf-wise, crowd.

Some years ago Babe Ruth and Babe Didrickson played a charity golf match against Mysterious Montague (a good but secretive golfer from Hollywood, who was journalistically famous at the time) and a lady partner. The course was in easy reach of New York City curiosity-seekers, and the players did well to come out of the match alive. Play ended prematurely at the ninth hole, when the audience swept completely over the green and began to compete for pieces of the players' clothes, and of the players themselves, as souvenirs. Montague, halfway undressed by admirers, broke for the clubhouse at a dead run and hid there.

"A tough crowd," said Ruth, who was used to crowds, mopping his brow. Tough, and, like all golf galleries, polite or not, misguided, to my mind. Watching men compete with men is one thing. Watching men compete against a small ball and their ulcers, which is the true substance of big-league golf today, is something else; it takes a high degree of a very special kind of enthusiasm.

Of the man-against-man sports, or contests between individuals, boxing — prize-fighting is a more accurate word for it — has always been my favorite; and it still ranks next to baseball with me. But facts must be faced: as a spectator sport the fight game is in a state of decline. The sources of talent have dried up. Television has killed the small fight clubs. There are perhaps no more than six or seven first-rate men, by old standards, left in the ring. The old training requirements, which made for good legs, sharp reflexes and strong, sustained fighting, are seldom followed these days. This is a result of modern conditions generally, and not the particular fault of television. From one cause and another, the modern boxer is to the old-timer as the thoroughbred race horse (a synthetic organism, geared for sprints, susceptible to death from a broken bone or a hangnail) is to the work horse.

But the present-day fighter is short not only on strength and stamina but on skill. He has little chance to learn boxing, and he's in a hurry, anyway — to get on television, and to throw the haymakers and launch the brief, purposeless spurts of action that the new mass boxing audience is said to be partial to. Maybe the television audience has been misrepresented and wronged. But it seems to enjoy what it gets, and what it gets is something entirely different, in the main, from what we were given by the old masters, of whom there used always to be forty or fifty in business in any given year.

Which brings me back to baseball — and I'll grant that in baseball, too, the haymaker style is more important than it was, and that some of the neat, deft, tactical touches that made the game so many-sided and yet so beautifully sensible and satisfying are being lost. Even so, baseball remains the best of all games, structurally, visually and psychologically. For this spectator, no other spectator sport can compare with it. It is fine to play, as well. If you are uncivil enough to say, "Then why don't you get out there and play it, instead of corroding the seat of your pants watching it?", I can only ask, What do you do if curve-ball pitching begins to fool you at the age of 13? You get glasses, and you watch baseball. And you have no complaints.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What are the defects, from the spectator point of view, of wrestling? football? boat-racing? horse-racing? track and field? golf?
2. Quote Lardner's reasons for assigning first place to baseball. How could it be improved?
3. What is Lardner's second favorite sport?
4. What is the favorite sport of the members of your class, to watch? to play? Compare your own favorite sport to baseball.

## A Laugh for the Olympics

*Allen Jackson graduated from the University of Michigan in 1951 "with one degree in liberal arts and three letters in football," he says. He played guard on Michigan's Rose Bowl team. He has since had a year of graduate study in England, has been a worker in a copper mine and in a steel mill, and has taught in New Orleans. While in England he played Rugby football with an independent club and described that experience in an Atlantic Monthly article, "Rugby Is a Better Game."*

1

During the past year many newspapers and magazines in this country have felt obliged to print at least one article on the possibility of the Russians' winning the Olympic games. All of them have dwelt on the same themes, have used the same examples, and have expressed the same general point of view. Some of them have been sad, some of them mad. Some have been written by professional sports writers, some by general commentators. But no matter who the author or what his variation on the same theme, every article has contained the same basic flaw: all of them have been entirely lacking in humor.

Sport is now a question of Moral Seriousness. Sport is now commented on by the heads of Church and State, and it is even given some attention by the Makers of Policy. This has been going on for quite a few years. The Americans and the Russians are not the first ones to get sport in such a fix, either. The Greeks did the same. They too made sport a question of Moral Seriousness, and also national pride and national self-righteousness.

It is this business of self-righteousness that calls for humor — and also ensures one's never getting it. Self-righteous people, like us, like the writers of these un-Olympian Olympic articles, like their counterparts in Russia, are the most humorless of beings. They never laugh at themselves and so they never get the true facts. Take Avery Brundage, for example — the man who for many years has been our anointed supreme judge of sporting ethics and our number one tracer of moral lines. He has made some elementary mistakes. Once he wrote in an article: "There is a touch of irony in this [the Russians' beating our boys and breaking our records], for sports and games were once almost exclusively Anglo-Saxon." I know that this is an elementary mistake because I for one have heard of the Ancient Greeks; and they were not Anglo-Saxons. Where I come from, a Greek is just as un-Anglo-Saxon as Jim Thorpe or Jesse Owens or Bronko Nagurski.



Well, sir, when a person can't see a laugh in the Olympics he is coming pretty close to being un-American. I say that because the impression I got from reading my college anthologies was that we Americans are noted for our sense of humor; and the way I learned it, our humor is the sort that always shows up especially strong when the chips are down. So in view of the fact that we have already lost the Winter Olympics to the Russians and that we stand a fine chance of losing again in Melbourne, we shouldn't blame ourselves too much if we can't help seeing some laughs in the way us 99 per cent pure products of the American Way of Life talk about them Red Bums.

But if we are going to laugh wisely, we ought to have a fairly clear idea of what we are laughing at. So first let's have a look at these Russian athletes and see what we are up against.

The Russian athletes are grim. This fact has been repeated many times in the sad and mad articles, so it must be true. By now everyone must have heard about the Russian skier who never uses a ski lift, because, I think he said, in sport as in life you can't fully appreciate the thrilling ride down unless you have sweated and cussed your way up. This doesn't seem to be such a wrong idea — especially if you are trying to get in shape for a big meet, and if you live in a cold poor country where they don't have too many steam-heated ski lifts.

The Russians' grimness is something we have to watch out for, however, because we good-natured Yanks are never grim, and it might take us by surprise. We play hard, of course, and it is true that the faces of our athletes are at times so sternly set and fiercely knotted, and so determinedly denuded of any chance smirk, that their expressions might well be considered — by un-Anglo-Saxons who are not familiar with the subtleties of the American Face — grim. But we do not call these expressions grim. What do we call them? Is there a difference between the Russian grimness and the "American Expression"?

There certainly is; and the key to the difference was furnished last summer by a man in *Life* magazine who said, "Soviet teams do not play at their sports; they work at them." And we all know that whenever anyone is working he looks pretty grim. That's the difference: the Russians work, the Americans play.

But that isn't the whole story, I'm afraid; because even though the American players *play*, they very often do not *look* as if they are playing. Some of them look as if they are working. This peculiarity was explained by the same magazine that printed the above statement — a few months later, in a photo story about the souls of American football players. A lot of pictures were taken of faces. The photography was very well done, as I was able to judge with a certain amount of authority, for I played on a team that had faces just like the ones in the pictures. I saw that the photographer had accurately caught the collective single mood, the collective single expression. All the faces had it. There wasn't the slightest twitch or twinkle of humor in any of those faces; but mind you, they were not grim. The editors of *Life* didn't say just what kind of expression

it was, but they did suggest that it was one that led to victory; and it was therefore an expression that was altogether fitting and proper. Personally, I wish the editors had been more definite. Before we go to Melbourne we ought to have a single word or phrase to describe those of our athletes whose faces seem to express work rather than play. Perhaps we could use "Fitting and Proper." Or for short, FAP.

The Russians are Spartan and they are grim. These qualities are closely connected with another fact we know about them: the Russians are forced to engage in sport. Now if there is anything that tends to make me fear the Russians, that causes me to wonder if they are indeed a separate breed, it is this fact about their being forced to engage in sport. The Russians, we know, train ten hours a day, every day, rain or shine or Siberian snow. Therefore they must be a new breed; for every coach knows that even the best Anglo-Saxon athletes are very tired after three hours practice, and if they were forced to work any longer than that they would fold up and die; or they would fake a Charley horse and go home to their TV sets. But I can't really believe that the Russians are a new breed. Instead I rather incline to the notion that our intelligence agents who tell us these things are a chubby and nearsighted bunch of fellows who have never in their lives engaged in strenuous sport; and having no practical experience, they don't realize that top-level athletic accomplishment is one of the most unforceable of all human activities, and that if an athlete hasn't got a great and inborn and entirely personal will to win, no commissar will ever be able to order him to have one.

## 2

I do not wish to dwell on the mistakes that our intelligence agents have made; but I know that the above comments will draw fire, and many people will say, "All right, maybe they don't practice ten hours a day; but we know for sure that when a Russian athlete *loses*, he catches holy hell, to say the least." So I must add a word about this. I have never been in Russia; but I am quite positive that our intelligence agents are misinformed when they report that the Russian State chastises severely any Russian athlete who does not win. The case of Yuri Tukulov, who lost a rowing race at Henley, is now almost as famous among American sportsmen as the case of the skier who never uses a ski lift. All the sad and mad articles have pointed out Yuri Tukulov as a pitiable example of what happens when a Russian athlete loses.

What happened was this: Yuri Tukulov won a gold medal at Helsinki in '52. He was very grim when he won the gold medal. Then, believe it or not, he grew less grim. When Yuri returned to Moscow after the Olympics the MVD observed that he smiled at least once a week. Then, in '54, Yuri lost a race to a grim Yugoslav at Henley. That was when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics started to give him hell. Yuri Tukulov was publicly chastised. In *Pravda*.

He was investigated. Indignities were cast upon him in public places by the MVD. His loyalty was questioned. His friends turned on him and wrote exposés of his un-Russian personal habits — articles that appeared in the Russian counterpart of *Confidential* magazine.

I do not doubt that all this happened. I am positive that it did happen. But the point that our intelligence reports emphasized was that this chastisement was *ordered* by the Russian State, by the Party. That part of the story is false. Our agents were misinformed. It is true that the Russian politicians are as fond of wasting breath as American politicians are; but I do not believe that the Russians are such maniacally profligate breath-wasters that they would order their sports writers to do something that the sports writers, and many others, were already eager to do.

The Russian State did not order the chastisement of the defeated Yuri Tukulov. It wasn't at all necessary to give such an order. The reason it wasn't necessary is that the Russians are basically very much like us. They are just as fickle as we are. There are people among the Russians who spend one half of their time on earth worshipping heroes, and the other half of the time snarling at champions who have stumbled. All of us, except our intelligence agents, know that we have the same kind of people in this country. Some of them are sports writers, some are literary critics; many are leaders of thought, and many are just plain bums. They are all bums, when you come right down to it. A person who gangs up with others and kicks a champion when he is down is always a bum, no matter what language he yaps in, or what sophisticated magazine prints his parodies.

I now come to the wickedest of all the facts that we know about the Russians. It is what *Life* magazine stated in the title of one of its sad articles: "Red Amateurs Are Pros." What, indeed, could be wickeder than sending professional athletes to the Olympic games — the Olympic games which, except for the very beginning, when the un-Anglo-Saxon Greeks often gave big money and big concubines to champions, have always been the most completely amateur of all completely amateur contests? What could be more un-American? Did we not prove our purity for all time in this respect when we took Jim Thorpe's Olympic medals away from him after discovering that he had once accepted five dollars for playing baseball in Dry Gulch, Oklahoma?

Up to now I have given the Russians the benefit of the doubt; but in this matter of paying their amateur athletes I am afraid that I shall have to say that they are very different from us. They give their athletes money; we give our athletes automobiles. We also give them free room and board, private tutors, private final examinations, special courses, first-class boat and plane fare to far places, and rooms in the best hotels. And furthermore, we do not even give these paltry things to an athlete if his father makes more than \$50,000 a year.

It seems odd to us Americans that when we give ordinary and necessary

things to our athletes, we become vulnerable to foreign propaganda. The reason it seems odd to us is this: we are products of the American Way of Life; we are gifted with a certain moral superiority over the rest of the world, especially the Eastern half, including France; and we are therefore able to make moral judgments, draw moral lines, and tread moral tightropes with a skill and delicate precision that is totally beyond the capacity of such people as the Russians. We are able to explain, for example, exactly why it is wrong and un-amateur for Jim Thorpe to accept one five-dollar bill from a semi-pro baseball club in Oklahoma, and why it is right, and quite amateur, for an American university to give each of its football players a five-dollar steak dinner at the training table every night throughout the season. Except Sundays. We also know why it is wrong for the Russian government to provide athletes with jobs that will give them the time and opportunity to engage in sport, and why it is right for an American university to provide its boys with the same kind of jobs.

Such precise moral distinctions are easy for us to make; but the Russians are not anywhere near that far advanced. That is why they do not understand us. They even laugh at us. They call us hypocrites. Well, if there is going to be any understanding at all, we must try to understand the Russians. Since we are their moral superiors, it is the least we can do.

We must try to understand the Russians' conception of amateurism and professionalism. They think — crudely enough, to be sure — that in this day of transcontinental and transoceanic engagements and long practice hours, the only person who can be unquestionably amateur is the one whose father makes at least \$50,000 a year. Anyone else must receive some financial help. The Russians think that the man who receives one ruble is as much a pro as the man who receives a thousand rubles. They think that no judge on earth is such a brilliant moralist that he can say an athlete who gets \$50 expense money is an amateur, but an athlete who gets \$85.42 is a professional. We of course know that it is quite possible to draw such lines. We did it very well in the case of Jim Thorpe, and we are doing it again in the case of Wes Santee. But when we do it, the Russians call us impostors, hypocrites, liars, and self-righteous fools.

They say that in addition to being hypocrites we are also poor sports, because we suggest strongly that the Russian athletes are good *only* because they are paid and threatened; and if they weren't paid and threatened they'd never have a chance against the Americans. According to the Russians, an assumption like that is not sporting. They say that the only reason we are sad and mad at them is that when we talk sternly of the difference between amateurs and professionals, we are playing a game with sport; and we are mad at the Russians because they are now beating us at our own game. They say that for a year we have been making excuses for our prospective defeat; and that is not saying much for the confidence we have in our boys' ability to win in the clutch. They say, Come on, Yanks, don't be afraid — we put on our pants the same as you.

Furthermore, say the Russians, we are not scientific. If we were scientific we would know that the country most likely to win is not the one with the most payments and threats; the country most likely to win is the one that has the fewest chronic spectators, the fewest chronic TV-watchers, the fewest hot-rods, the fewest golfers, and the most village arenas.

Well, that's what we've got to deal with. They think they are right. We think we are right. I have a suspicion that both the Russians and the Americans have much in common in regard to training procedure for Olympic athletes. If that is true, then maybe the best thing for us to do is just to have a chuckle at ourselves, have one at them, shake hands, and may the best man win.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by a "FAP" expression?
2. What do American and Russian sports writers and sports fans have in common?
3. What has TV to do with the development of Olympic champions?
4. In your opinion, how much financial assistance should an athlete have?

**John Steinbeck**

## Fishing in Paris

*For a biographical sketch of John Steinbeck, see page 327.*

I am one of the world's foremost observers of other people's fishing. I believe that certain national characteristics emerge in fishing and attitudes toward fishing. With this in view I have for many years studied the relationship of fisherman to fish. It is therefore natural that I am drawn to the Oise on a Sunday afternoon in the summer where one may observe Parisian fishing at its very best.

Perhaps I should set down some American and British attitudes and methods in order that my conclusions about French fishing may stand out by contrast.

Fishing in America has several faces of which I shall only mention two. First — all Americans believe that they are born fishermen. For a man to admit

a distaste for fishing would be like denouncing mother-love or hating moonlight.

The American conceives of fishing as more than a sport: it is his personal contest against nature. He buys mountains of equipment: reels, lines, rods, lures, all vastly expensive. Indeed, the manufacture and sale of fishing equipment is one of America's very large businesses. But equipment does not finish it. The fisherman must clothe himself for the fish with special and again expensive costumes. Then, if he can afford it, he buys or charters a boat as specialized for fishing as an operating theatre is for surgery. He is now ready to challenge the forces of nature in their fishy manifestations.

The fisherman prefers to travel many thousands of miles, to put himself through powerful disciplines, to learn a special vocabulary and to enter a kind of piscatorial religion all for the purpose of demonstrating his superiority over fish. He prefers the huge and powerful denizens of the sea which have great nuisance and little food value. Once fastened to his enemy, the fisherman subjects himself to physical torture while strapped into a chrome barber's chair, and resists for hours having his arms torn off. But he has proved that he is better than fish. Or he may celebrate the fighting quality of the bone fish which has no value except for the photographs of the antagonists. The fisherman endows the fish with great intelligence and fabulous strength to the end that in defeating it he is even more intelligent and powerful.

It has always been my private conviction that any man who pits his intelligence against a fish and loses has it coming, but this is a highly un-American thought. I hope it will not be denounced.

A secondary but important place of fishing in America is political. No candidate would think of running for public office without first catching and being photographed with a fish. A nonfisherman could not be elected President. This may explain why our politicians spend so much time on rivers and streams. Golf has nowhere near the political importance that fishing has, but maybe that is changing.

The British fisherman has quite a different approach, one that brings out all the raw sentiment he can permit himself. The English passion for private property rises to its greatest glory in the ownership and negotiability of exclusive fishing rights in rivers and streams. The ideal British fishing story would go something like this:

Under a submerged log in a stream through a beautiful meadow lies an ancient and brilliant trout which for years has resisted and outwitted the best that can be brought against him. The whole country knows him. He even has a name. He is called Old George or Old Gwyndolyn, as the case may be. The fact that Old George has lived so long can be ascribed to the gentlemanly rules of conduct set up between trout and Englishmen. Under these rules the fisherman must use improbable tackle and a bait Old George is known to find dis-

tasteful. Of course a small boy with a worm or anyone with a half stick of dynamite could do for Old George, but that would be as un-British as shooting a chicken-stealing fox instead of setting twenty-five horsemen and fifty socially eligible dogs after the fox whom we will call Old Wilbur. The English use "Old" as a term of endearment verging on the sloppy. A British wife who truly loves her husband to distraction adds the word poor so that he becomes Poor Old Charley, but this is affection verging on the distasteful.

In our ideal fish story the fisherman rereads Isaak Walton to brush up his philosophical background, smokes many pipes, reduces all language to a series of grunts, and finally sets out of an evening to have a go at Old George.

He creeps near to the sunken log and drops his badly tied dry fly up stream of the log so that it will float practically into Old George's mouth. This has been happening for ten or fifteen years. But one evening perhaps Old George is sleeping with his mouth open or maybe he is bored. The hook gets entangled in his mouth. Then the fisherman, with tears streaming from his eyes, pulls Poor Old George out on the grassy bank. There, with full military honours and a deep sense of sorrow from the whole community, Old George flops to his death. The fisherman eats George boiled with brussels sprouts, sews a black band on his arm and gains the power of speech sufficiently to bore the hell out of the local pub for years to come.

Now consider the banks of the lovely Oise on a summer Sunday afternoon. This is very different fishing. Each man has his place and does not move from it, sometimes a boat permanently moored between poles, sometimes his little station on the bank allotted and loved. Since the fishermen do not move it is conceivable that neither do the fish. The *status quo* must be universal. I have seen a man in his niche on the bank, a great umbrella over him, a camp chair under him, a bottle of wine beside him, and in front the reeds clipped to a neat low hedge and a row of geraniums planted.

The fishing equipment is simple but invariable. The pole is of bamboo, not expensive but often adorned, painted blue or red or sometimes in stripes of many colours. The tackle is as delicate and transparent as spider web. On a hook about the size of a pinhead is fixed a tiny bread pellet. The Parisian is now ready for the fishing.

Here is no sentiment, no contest, no grandeur, no economics. Now and then a silly baby fish may be caught, but most of the time there seems to be a courteous understanding by which fish and fishermen let each other strictly alone. Apparently there is also a rule about conversation. The fisherman's eyes get a dreaming look and he turns inward on his own thoughts, inspecting himself and his world in quiet. Because he is fishing he is safe from interruption. He can rest detached from the stresses and pressures of his life or anybody's life. In America it is said that it takes three weeks to rest from the rigours of a two weeks vacation. Not so on the Oise.

I find that I approve very highly of Parisian fishing. From the sanctity of this occupation a man may emerge refreshed and in control of his own soul. He is not idle. He is fishing.

I can't wait to buy a bamboo pole and a filament of line and a tube of bread-crumbs. I want to participate in this practice which allows a man to be alone with himself in dignity and peace. It seems a very precious thing to me.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What equipment does the American take fishing? the Frenchman? the Englishman?
2. Which fishermen derive sentimental advantages from the sport? philosophical advantages? political advantages?
3. What kind of fish do Americans like best to catch?
4. To what U.S. President does Steinbeck obliquely refer? Quote the sentence.

Joseph Wechsberg

## The Most Out of Music

*Joseph Wechsberg, traveler, musician, and journalist, is the author of many books and articles, especially dealing with his native Czechoslovakia, foreign continents, and the arts. According to critics, he "is at his best . . . in portraying the world of his boyhood and student days"; he "writes about music . . . with the love of an amateur."*

The pleasures of music are wonderful but elusive. It took me a good many years — years of hard work — to learn to listen to music, though I've always loved it and have played the violin since I was seven. I am still learning.

The rewards have been immense. Making music has given me some of the best hours of my life. Mere listening has brought me comfort on bad days and added enchantment to the good ones. Today I'll cheerfully drop everything for an evening of music.

When I was twelve, and lived in Ostravia, my home town in Czechoslovakia, an uncle of mine — "the musician," as he was called by the family, to distinguish him from the uncle "who went broke," the uncle "with the villa," "the doctor," the uncle "who ran off to South America" — invited me to join him

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and an aunt in a performance of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*, to celebrate the seventy-fifth birthday of my maternal grandmother.

My musical debut was artistically inferior but educationally momentous. My uncle was a businessman by profession and a musician by avocation. He played the violin, viola and cello, and in an emergency could pinch-hit on the piano, the clarinet, the accordion, the viola da gamba and other improbable instruments. He would go through the motions of daytime drudgery like a sleep-walker, but he came to life magically when darkness fell and it was time to make music at home. He was the most apathetic businessman and the most enthusiastic string-quartet player I have ever known. He was, naturally, the most sought-after musician in our town. He played first violin in his own quartet but would play second fiddle or any other needed part in somebody else's group, which is the test of genuine dedication.

That day in 1919, he announced to my violin teacher that I was to play the violin in the *Sinfonia Concertante*, one of Mozart's loveliest piano trios; he himself would play the viola and my aunt the piano. The teacher, knowing I wasn't quite ready for it, suggested diplomatically a less demanding piece, say, Grieg's *Anitra's Dance*, a perennial pop favorite. My uncle indignantly dismissed this low-brow notion and scheduled the first rehearsal for the following evening.

I'll never forget the ordeal. Normally a kindhearted, mild-mannered man with a balding head and thick glasses, my uncle became a different person the moment he sat down at his music stand. His facial muscles grew tense, his eyes wild, his manner dictatorial. When I started to tap my right foot because I'd lost track and couldn't count silently, he threatened me with his viola bow. He didn't mind false notes but would tolerate no lack of enthusiasm, not for a minute. I'd previously made music with a benign lady pianist who took a nonchalant view of demi-semiquavers, half tones and quarter rests and would skip difficult passages altogether. Now I found myself a member of a musical kolkhoz with few rights and stringent duties. In order to survive I had to listen — not only to my own instrument, as I'd done up to then, but to the others as well. I learned to lead and accompany, to give and take. It was a good school.

Our performance started out badly. My grandmother cried because she thought it was so nice, and my uncle cursed during the first movement because I flubbed two simple phrases that had come off well at every rehearsal. (On the other hand, I surprised myself by managing a difficult passage that had almost driven me to despair.) I played false notes, missed rests, lost control of my bowing, and committed all the sins of the neophyte. And then, halfway through the slow movement, something strange and wonderful happened. Suddenly I began to enjoy playing; for a few moments I heard my violin sing out above the other instruments. My hands no longer trembled and my tone became sweet and full and round. I was swept up into the stratosphere of divine harmony, and for a few seconds I experienced the supreme jubilation a skier

must feel as he races downhill through an orgy of spring sun and powdery snow. I closed my eyes, no longer aware of my own inadequacy or of the people around me.

I had discovered the happiness of making music for the sake of music.

Ever since, playing music has been a rich, rewarding occupation, a thrill never dulled by repetition. Best of all I like chamber music, particularly string quartets, the pure spirit of music. Great composers have performed greater miracles of beauty and depth of feeling with the four instruments of a quartet than with the polyphonous instrumental body of a large symphony orchestra. Playing a Mozart string quartet is like tasting an old claret; both seem to get better year after year. Chamber music is written for the living room rather than the concert hall, and it is played largely by dedicated amateurs. (An amateur, incidentally, is not necessarily an inferior musician but one whose enthusiasm often makes him overlook his shortcomings. He's *making* rather than playing music. To him, music is not "art" but a slice of life.)

At worst, the amateur makes every mistake in the musical book — and will fight for the right to do so. At best, he and his fellow players attain a special sort of ecstasy and subtle psychological rapport, a peculiar blend of humility and arrogance. Quartet playing is a fine exercise in companionship, a study in coexistence. Chamber musicians often fight but almost always make up. They tolerate no lack of gusto; the indifferent are never invited a second time. Neither are weaklings who want to quit at midnight, after playing a mere five hours and a half-dozen quartets — including a late Beethoven. And making music has a healthy, rejuvenating effect; I've seen white-haired septuagenarians become young at heart during an evening of quartet playing. Like swing musicians at a jam session, or drunks, they're always in the mood for one more.

There are, to be sure, some drawbacks to these supreme delights. A practicing fiddler creates a musical trauma for the entire neighborhood. That is why so many parents prefer their kids to study the piano (besides the decorative value of a piano in the living room). At the early, screeching stage, the aspiring fiddler needs affectionate guidance and firm discipline. My mother suffered from my early excursions into the labyrinth of fingered octaves, but she always exhorted me to keep practicing.

And there are crises. You begin to go to concerts and hear the unsurpassed masters. After an evening of Heifetz or Horowitz, a great many people come home in deep depression, resolved never to touch their instruments again. (Next day they're back at their études and scales.) Another crisis comes when the young musician has his first delusions of grandeur. There was a time during my studies at the Vienna Conservatory when I saw myself on the road to musical fame. There was always room at the top, wasn't there? Luckily, I got good advice from an old wise teacher. "If you really love music," he said, "don't choose it as your profession. Play it for your enjoyment."

I have played music for money *and* for enjoyment, and I know now how right he was. I've played in cinemas during the silent era and in boulevard cafes during the noisy 20's; in churches for Mass and aboard ship for dancing; with a phony gypsy band, and with a respectable symphony orchestra; and once I played Bach's *Double Concerto* with Jacques Thibaud, one of the world's great violinists, during a crossing on the *Ile de France*. But nothing has given me more pleasure than making music at home, in congenial surroundings, with equally dedicated fellow players who are gathered to make music for the fun of it.

The awful fact is that the career of the professional musician is hard and insecure. I know men in New York and Vienna, Boston and Berlin, first-rate musicians, members of great orchestras. Their life is an endless chain of practicing, rehearsing, instructing, traveling, recording, more rehearsing and practicing, performing concerts, playing at the opera. When they go on vacation they don't want to hear another note — except of chamber music. Even the weariest instrumentalist always seems to be ready for an evening of music and fun at home.

When Heifetz, Rubinstein and Piatigorsky return home to Southern California after months of strenuous touring, they play piano trios for relaxation. Chamber-music players are easygoing, hospitable, an unorganized but closely knit fraternity. How many times have I been invited by perfect strangers to come over and bring my Amati along!

There are said to be people who don't like music. I have never met them, but then I have never met kids who don't like ice cream either. There are people who didn't grow up with music, or who are bored by *Götterdämmerung*, Bruckner's *Eighth Symphony* or atonal cantatas; nothing wrong with that. But is there anyone who doesn't like folk songs or Christmas carols?

There are many who can take music or leave it, as long as it doesn't interfere with whatever else they are doing at the moment. They miss a lot, like color-blind people in a picture gallery. Getting the most out of listening to music means work, patience, good will. Years ago I didn't bother to listen to Bach; I thought his music was ponderous and repetitious. Then I forced myself to listen to Bach time and again. I made an effort to penetrate the magnificent architecture of his compositions — and now I like to hear Bach for hours at a time.

This may not exactly be "relaxed" listening; it demands concentration; but you get so much more out of it than when you just lean back and listen casually. For relaxation, there are the romantic moods of Chopin or the impressionistic dreams of Debussy; and there is always the sublime art of Mozart. Even there it pays to listen with devotion. Music is always alive; it can never be a mere hobby.

The pleasure of listening is greatly enhanced by a moderate knowledge of the score and of instrumental techniques. It helps to know a little about style

and phrasing, tempo and intonation, vocalization and falsetto, to be able to distinguish an oboe from a clarinet and an Italian-trained tenor from one who never studied *bel canto*. I used to be amused by the *aficionados* in concert halls and opera houses who followed the music in their scores; sometimes they would sway to the sound of the music with closed eyes and a blissful expression on their faces, and sometimes they would “conduct,” much to the annoyance of their neighbors. Lucky people; they enjoyed the music to the hilt because they knew something about it.

Nowadays I, too, look through the score before going to a concert or an opera (except when something on the program is new to me, because then I want to be surprised). I envy pianists who are able to play the score; the piano may not be the most heart-stirring instrument but it certainly is the most useful. A few minutes of score-reading give pleasant anticipation, and there is always the chance of discovering new nuances and hidden gems. Great music improves with repeated hearing; only bad works get worse.

After a while you will notice that you are becoming catholic in your tastes and tolerant in your prejudices. You will enjoy recitals as well as symphony concerts, operas and oratorios; you’ll like Bach and Gershwin, Claudio Monteverdi and Giuseppe Verdi, Johann Strauss and Richard Strauss. For years I dismissed Richard Strauss’ *Elektra* as a musical shock effect. Then, one day in Vienna, I met Helene Wildbrunn, a great soprano and one of the first *Elektras*.

“When I began to study the part,” she said, “I heard only noise. It seemed hopeless. I didn’t make an effort to understand the music. Then one day Strauss scolded me gently. ‘You’ve got to help me,’ he said. ‘A little patience and work, and you’ll see the sun begin to come through the underbrush of dissonances.’ Dear Strauss! *Elektra* became one of my favorite roles.”

It’s now one of my favorite operas. You’ve got to help these composers. To think that I would have missed all that beauty because I didn’t *want* to hear it! I know now how little it matters whether you prefer old or new music, high-brow or low-brow, vocal or symphonic, classical or pop, chorals or swing — as long as you *love music*.

#### QUESTIONS

1. At what age did Wechsberg start playing the violin? At what age did he first enjoy a public performance?
2. What kind of music does Wechsberg like best? What kind do you like?
3. Does a person’s taste in music become more discriminating with knowledge of different kinds of music?
4. What should anyone who loves music do about a profession?

*Al Capp (Alfred Gerald Caplin) was drawing and selling his own comic strips to neighborhood children when he was eleven years old. Born in New Haven in 1909, he moved with his family to Bridgeport and studied at Bridgeport High School (where he flunked geometry nine straight times) and at various schools of fine arts and Harvard University. He began his comic strip about the Yokums who "definitely belong to the submerged one third of the nation" in 1934 through a syndicate for eight newspapers, within fifteen years it was carried by more than 500 newspapers with a combined circulation of 27,000,000 readers. Capp is the author of Life and Times of the Shmoo, and has contributed articles to the Atlantic Monthly, Life, and Cosmopolitan.*

You may, unless you had something better to do, have been reading my comic strip *Li'l Abner* this week. If so, you are probably startled to see that my hero is apparently being married to one Daisy Mae Scragg. This time it's the real thing. Yes, after 18 years the poor lout is finally, hopelessly married, and in one of Marryin' Sam's cheapest, most humiliating weddings.

I never intended to do this. My comic-strip characters are not the kind who grow through boyhood and adolescence, get married and raise their own kids. The Yokums of Dogpatch are the same sweet and brainless characters they always were. And the fact that Abner always managed somehow to escape Daisy Mae's warm, eager arms provided me with a story that I could tell whenever I couldn't think of anything better. Frankly I intended to go through life happily and heartlessly betraying you decent, hopeful people who want to see things come out right. I never intended to have *Li'l Abner* marry Daisy Mae because your pathetic hope that I would was one of the main reasons you 50 million romance lovers read my strip.

For the first few years it was easy to fool you; you didn't know me well then. You followed developments eagerly, trustfully. When I met any of you, I was asked, "When will *Li'l Abner* marry Daisy Mae?" in a friendly, hopeful tone. Later, as I betrayed your hopes in more and more outrageous ways, your tone became a little bitter. One year I had Daisy Mae marry a tree trunk, thinking that Abner was hiding inside it. Next day, naturally, it turned out that the contents were an old pair of socks, but that Daisy's marriage to them was irrevocably legal. That was a pretty problem. Your tone became threatening. Later on I poisoned her, and Abner consented to marry her because it was her dying wish (Why not? She would be safely dead in a minute anyway.); but just as you

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thought the wedding had finally taken place, I let her drink some of Dogpatch's sizzling superfluid, "Kickapoo Joy Juice," which instantly restored her to life, so Abner was no longer bound by his promise. You still asked me when they would *really* marry, but your tone was a little more threatening. Then I let Daisy ecstatically marry a boy who not only turned out to be merely Abner's double but a bigamist too, so even that marriage didn't count. Now your tone was downright mutinous, and your question went something like: "For God's sake, will Abner EVER marry Daisy Mae?" Just the same, I knew you would still keep watching and waiting. This was the kind of suspense I needed to keep you reading my comic strip, so, no matter how impatient or indignant you got, I never intended to let your foolish, romantic dreams come true.

So why did I do it this week? Why, after all these years of tricking you, did I finally trick myself? Well, the real reason isn't as simple as Abner, Daisy or even suspense. To understand why I have done this awful thing you will have to bear with me while I explain how and why I created them in the first place.

When I was in my early 20s and about to start a comic strip, I found myself in a terrible dilemma. The funny comic strip, the kind I wanted to do, was vanishing from the funny page. A frightening new thing had been discovered: namely, that you could sell more papers by worrying people than by amusing them. Comic strips which had no value except that they were comic were beginning to vanish from the funny papers. Rube Goldberg's dazed *Mike and Ike*, Fred Oppen's *Happy Hooligan*, who wore a tomato can on his head, Milt Gross's *Count Screwloose*, who regularly escaped from the booby hatch only to return to it because things were more normal there — this beloved procession of clowns, innocents and cheerful imbeciles — slowly faded. In their place came a sobbing, screaming, shooting parade of the new "comic"-strip characters: an orphan who talked like the Republican platform of 1920; a prizefighter who advised children that brains were better than brawn while beating the brains out of his physically inferior opponents; detectives who explored and explained every sordid and sickening byway of crime and then made it all okay by concluding that these attractively blueprinted crimes didn't really pay; and girl reporters who were daily threatened with rape and mutilation.

Don't get me wrong. I was terrified by the emergence of this new kind of comic strip 18 years ago only because I didn't have the special qualities they required — not because they didn't have quality. *Dick Tracy* is a magnificently drawn, exquisitely written shocker comparable, in its own terms, with Poe. But "suspense" strips, though enormously effective, disdain fun and fantasy. Suspense was what editors wanted when I was ready to create my own comic strip — but all I could do was fun and fantasy.

So I tried to draw straight-faced suspense comic strips. I tried to create smart and superior heroes, and submerged them in blood-curdling tragedies, increasing in complexity, hopelessness and horror and thereby creating reader anxiety,

nausea and terror — *i.e.*, suspense. But I couldn't do it. I just couldn't believe in them. The suspense strips require one-dimensional characters: good guys and bad guys, and no fooling around with anything in between. I simply couldn't believe in my one-dimensional good guys and bad guys — as I drew them. I discovered good things in the bad guys, and vice versa. So my hero turned out to be big and strong like the suspense-strip heroes, but he also turned out to be stupid, as big, strong heroes sometimes are. His mammy, like mine, and possibly yours, turned out to be a miracle of goodness, but at the same time she was kind of bossy, quite self-righteous and sweetly ridiculous. His girl, although wildly beautiful, is vaguely sloppy and, although infinitely virtuous, pursues him like the most unprincipled seductress.

The good people in my hero's town, possibly like those in your town, often are a pain in the neck. And the bad'uns, like some bad'uns in real life, are often more attractive than the good 'uns. The Scragg Boys, Lem and Luke, are fiendish when they are snatching milk from whimpering babies or burning down orphan asylums to get some light to read comic books by (only to realize that they can't read, anyway); but even the most horrified reader can't help being touched by their respectfully asking their pappy's permission to commit all this manslaughter and mayhem. Monsters they certainly are, but they are dutiful children too.

The society people in *Li'l Abner* always have impressive names, but there is always something a little wrong with them too — like Henry Cabbage Cod, Daphne Degradingham, Sir Cecil Cesspool (he's deep), Peabody Flcabody and Basil Bassoon. Dumpington Van Lump seemed a harmless, hospitable kid until it developed that his favorite book was *How to Make Lampshades Out of Your Friends*. Colossal McGenius was so brilliant in giving business advice that he seemed to be justified in charging \$1,000 a word for talking to worried tycoons; but it turned out that his weakness was telling long, involved jokes (at \$1,000 a word) about three Bulgarians, whereupon he remembered, much too late, that they were actually three *Persians*, and so he had to start the story all over again. When he finally got to the advice it was great, but by that time the tycoon had gone bankrupt.

When I introduced a mythical country, Lower Slobbovia, I was as technical as the straightest suspense-strip creator, and gave readers a map. The map was perfectly reasonable except that the names of its parts created some distrust and disrespect for the country. The oceans were the Hotlantic and Pitziffic, and there was another body of water called the Gulf of Pincus. The capital, Ceaser Siddy, home of Good King Nogoodnik, was flanked by the twin cities of Tsh-Tsh and Tch-Tch. Its leading citizens had familiar and famous, but somehow embarrassing, names like Douglas Snowbanks Jr., Harry S. Rasputintruman and Clark Bagle. Everything in *Li'l Abner* was my effort to be as straight as the straight strips, but colored, however, with my conviction that nothing is ever entirely

straight, entirely good, entirely bad, and that everything is a little ridiculous. As in the straight suspense strips, I dutifully created the standard, popular suspense situations, but something forced me to carry them so far that terror became absurdity.

For instance, when the Yokums make gigantic sacrifices for what they are convinced is a noble and beneficial cause, the reader knows they are swindling themselves; even victory will benefit only the enemy. When the Yokums are being heroes they are being not only heroes — they are being damned fools at the same time. When their adversaries are being villainous, they are not only vile, they are also confused and frightened.

*Li'l Abner* had to come out that way, because that's the way things seem to me. Well, it happened to make a big hit. It was a success because it was something I hadn't thought much about as such. It was a satire. Nobody had done one quite in these terms before. I was delighted that I had. I was exhilarated by the privilege this gave me to kid hell out of everything.

It was wonderful while it lasted; and I had no reason for marrying Abner off to Daisy Mae. But then something happened that threatens to shackle me and my kind of comic strip. It is what I call the gradual loss of our fifth freedom. Without it, the other four freedoms aren't much fun, because the fifth is the freedom to laugh at each other.

My kind of comic strip finds its fun wherever there is lunacy, and American life is rich in lunacy everywhere you look. I created labor-hating labor leaders, money-foolish financiers, and Senator Jack S. ("Good old Jack S.") Phogbound. When highway billboard advertising threatened to create a coast-to-coast iron curtain between the American motorist and the beautiful American countryside, I got some humorous situations out of that too. Race-hate peddlers gave me some of my juiciest comedy characters, and I had the Yokums tell them what I know is true, that all races are God's children, equally beloved by their Father. For the first 14 years I reveled in the freedom to laugh at America. But now America has changed. The humorist feels the change more, perhaps, than anyone. Now there are things about America we can't kid.

I realized it first when four years ago I created the Shmoo. You remember the Shmoo? It was a totally boneless and wildly affectionate little animal which, when broiled, came out steak and, when fried, tasted like chicken. It also laid neatly packaged and bottled eggs and milk, all carefully labeled "Grade A." It multiplied without the slightest effort. It loved to be eaten, and would drop dead, out of sheer joy, when you looked at it hungrily. Having created the animal, I let it run wild in the world of my cartoon strip. It was simply a fairy tale and all I had to say was wouldn't it be wonderful if there were such an animal and, if there were, how idiotically some people might behave. Mainly, the response to the Shmoo was delight. But there were also some disturbing letters. Some writers wanted to know what was the idea of kidding big business, by



creating the Shmoo (which had *become* big business). Other writers wanted to know what was the idea of criticising labor, by creating the Shmoo, which made labor unnecessary.

It was disturbing, but I didn't let it bother me too much. Then a year later, I created the Kigmy, an animal that loved to be kicked around, thus making it unnecessary for people to kick each other around. This time a lot more letters came. Their tone was angrier, more suspicious. They asked the craziest questions, like: Was I, in creating the Kigmy, trying to create pacifism and thus, secretly, nonresistance to Communism? Were the Kigmy kickers secretly the big bosses kicking the workers around? Were the Kigmy kickers secretly the labor unions kicking capital around? And finally, what in hell was the idea of creating the Kigmy anyhow, because it implied some criticism of some kinds of Americans and any criticism of anything American was (now) un-American? I was astounded to find it had become unpopular to laugh at any fellow Americans. In fact, when I looked around, I realized that a new kind of humorist had taken over, the humorist who kidded nothing but himself. That was the only thing left. Hollywood had stopped making ain't-America-wonderful-and-ridiculous movies, and it was making ain't-America-wonderful-but-anyone-who-says-it's-ridiculous-too-deserves-to-be-picketed movies. Radio, the most instantly obedient to pressure of all media, had sensed the atmosphere, an atmosphere in which Jack Benny is magnificent but in which Will Rogers would have suffocated.

So that was when I decided to go back to fairy tales until the atmosphere is gone. That is the real reason why Li'l Abner married Daisy Mae. At least for the time being, I can't create any more Shmoos, any more Kigmies; and when Senator Phogbound turns up now, I have to explain carefully that, heavens-to-Betsy, goodness-no, he's not typical; nobody like THAT ever holds public office. After a decade and a half of using my characters as merely reasons to swing my searchlight on America, I began all over again to examine them, as people. Frankly, I was delighted with them. (Frankly, I'm delighted with nearly everything I do. The one in the room who laughs loudest at my own jokes or my own comic strip is me.) I became reacquainted with Li'l Abner as a human being, with Daisy Mae as an agonizingly frustrated girl. I began to wonder myself what it would be like if they were ever married. The more I thought about it, the more complicated and disastrous and, therefore, irresistible, the idea became.

For instance, Li'l Abner has never willingly kissed any female except his mother and a pig. Well — if he got married, he'd *have* to. Even he couldn't avoid it for more than a month or so. What would happen? Would he approve of kissing? Would he say anything good about it? (And thus make it popular with millions of red-blooded young Americans whose "ideel" he is.) Would he do it again? As a bachelor he is frankly a bum. He just sleeps, eats and goes cat-

fishing. As a married man he would have to support his own household. How would he do it? Is there anybody stupid enough to hire someone as stupid as he is? Is there *any* profession that requires as little intelligence as he has? And how about Mammy Yokum? She has always ruled Abner with an iron fist. Would she continue to after he has his own home? And how would Daisy Mae take this? Sure, she's been sweet and docile with Mammy Yokum all these years, but that might only have been because she needed her help in trapping Abner. Now that he's her'n, will she show her true colors and tangle with Mammy for the lightweight championship of the new Yokum home? How about babies? Married people frequently have babies. Would *they* have a baby? Will he really be born on the Fourth of July? Is it possible that they'd name him Yankee Doodle Yokum? Babies have uncles. Could I freeze the blood of the entire nation by having Mammy Yokum (who can accomplish anything, even single-handed) produce a baby of her own, five minutes after Li'l Yankee Doodle Yokum was born? Would this child be known as Uncle Yokum?

And how about Sadie Hawkins Day? It has become a national holiday. It's my responsibility. It doesn't happen on any set day in November; it happens on the day I say it happens. I get tens of thousands of letters from colleges, communities and church groups, starting around July, asking me *what* day, so they can make plans. Well, Sadie Hawkins Day has always revolved around Li'l Abner fearing marriage to Daisy Mae. Now that his worst fears have come hideously true, what will he and Daisy Mae do on Sadie Hawkins Day? Will Lower Slobbovia inaugurate its own "Sadie Huckins Day" and import Li'l Abner and Daisy Mae as technical advisers? In short, once Abner and Daisy Mae are married, do they live happily forever after like other people, or is this just the beginning of even more complicated disasters, more unbearable miseries? They are married, all right. But if you think the future is serene for them, you're ("Haw! Haw!") living in a fool's paradise.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What has been happening to Li'l Abner in current strips?
2. With what classic American writer does Capp compare the author of *Dick Tracy*?
3. What is your opinion of the comics as American literature? Do they have any harmful effects?
4. What is Sadie Hawkins Day?
5. Comment on "Now there are things about America we can't kid."



## RELIGION

E. M. Forster

### What I Believe

*E. M. Forster, English novelist and critic who began his career shortly before the first World War, has been praised for his "readiness to converse with the reader on terms of intellectual equality" and for his "shy humility — that famous minor tone — which is immensely pleasing and, in this assertive age, frequently moving." His chief works are the novel, A Passage to India (1924), which established his reputation, Aspects of the Novel (1927), critical lectures delivered at Forster's alma mater, Cambridge University; and the collections of essays Abinger Harvest (1936) and Two Cheers for Democracy (1951), and of short stories Celestial Omnibus (1923).*

I do not believe in Belief. But this is an age of faith, and there are so many militant creeds that, in self-defence, one has to formulate a creed of one's own. Tolerance, good temper and sympathy are no longer enough in a world which is rent by religious and racial persecution, in a world where ignorance rules, and science, who ought to have ruled, plays the subservient pimp. Tolerance, good temper and sympathy — they are what matter really, and if the human race is not to collapse they must come to the front before long. But for the moment they are not enough, their action is no stronger than a flower, battered beneath a military jack-boot. They want stiffening, even if the process coarsens them. Faith, to my mind, is a stiffening process, a sort of mental starch, which ought to be applied as sparingly as possible. I dislike the stuff. I do not believe in it, for its own sake, at all. Herein I probably differ from most people, who believe in Belief, and are only sorry they cannot swallow even more than they do. My law-givers are Erasmus and Montaigne, not Moses and St. Paul. My temple stands not upon Mount Moriah but in that Elysian Field where even the immoral are admitted. My motto is: "Lord, I disbelieve — help thou my unbelief."

I have, however, to live in an Age of Faith — the sort of epoch I used to hear praised when I was a boy. It is extremely unpleasant really. It is bloody in every sense of the word. And I have to keep my end up in it. Where do I start?

With personal relationships. Here is something comparatively solid in a world full of violence and cruelty. Not absolutely solid, for Psychology has split and shattered the idea of a "Person," and has shown that there is something incalculable in each of us, which may at any moment rise to the surface and

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destroy our normal balance. We don't know what we are like. We can't know what other people are like. How, then, can we put any trust in personal relationships, or cling to them in the gathering political storm? In theory we cannot. But in practice we can and do. Though A is not unchangeably A or B unchangeably B, there can still be love and loyalty between the two. For the purpose of living one has to assume that the personality is solid, and the "self" is an entity, and to ignore all contrary evidence. And since to ignore evidence is one of the characteristics of faith, I certainly can proclaim that I believe in personal relationships.

Starting from them, I get a little order into the contemporary chaos. One must be fond of people and trust them if one is not to make a mess of life, and it is therefore essential that they should not let one down. They often do. The moral of which is that I must, myself, be as reliable as possible, and this I try to be. But reliability is not a matter of contract — that is the main difference between the world of personal relationships and the world of business relationships. It is a matter for the heart, which signs no documents. In other words, reliability is impossible unless there is a natural warmth. Most men possess this warmth, though they often have bad luck and get chilled. Most of them, even when they are politicians, *want* to keep faith. And one can, at all events, show one's own little light here, one's own poor little trembling flame, with the knowledge that it is not the only light that is shining in the darkness, and not the only one which the darkness does not comprehend. Personal relations are despised today. They are regarded as bourgeois luxuries, as products of a time of fair weather which is now past, and we are urged to get rid of them, and to dedicate ourselves to some movement or cause instead. I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country. Such a choice may scandalise the modern reader, and he may stretch out his patriotic hand to the telephone at once and ring up the police. It would not have shocked Dante, though. Dante places Brutus and Cassius in the lowest circle of Hell because they had chosen to betray their friend Julius Caesar rather than their country Rome. Probably one will not be asked to make such an agonising choice. Still, there lies at the back of every creed something terrible and hard for which the worshipper may one day be required to suffer, and there is even a terror and a hardness in this creed of personal relationships, urbane and mild though it sounds. Love and loyalty to an individual can run counter to the claims of the State. When they do — down with the State, say I, which means that the State would down me.

This brings me along to Democracy, "even Love, the Beloved Republic, which feeds upon Freedom and lives." Democracy is not a Beloved Republic really, and never will be. But it is less hateful than other contemporary forms of government, and to that extent it deserves our support. It does start from the

assumption that the individual is important, and that all types are needed to make a civilisation. It does not divide its citizens into the bossers and the bossed — as an efficiency-regime tends to do. The people I admire most are those who are sensitive and want to create something or discover something, and do not see life in terms of power, and such people get more of a chance under a democracy than elsewhere. They found religions, great or small, or they produce literature and art, or they do disinterested scientific research, or they may be what is called “ordinary people,” who are creative in their private lives, bring up their children decently, for instance, or help their neighbours. All these people need to express themselves; they cannot do so unless society allows them liberty to do so, and the society which allows them most liberty is a democracy.

Democracy has another merit. It allows criticism, and if there is not public criticism there are bound to be hushed-up scandals. That is why I believe in the Press, despite all its lies and vulgarity, and why I believe in Parliament. Parliament is often sneered at because it is a Talking Shop, I believe in it *because* it is a talking shop. I believe in the Private Member who makes himself a nuisance. He gets snubbed and is told that he is cranky or ill-informed, but he does expose abuses which would otherwise never have been mentioned, and very often an abuse gets put right just by being mentioned. Occasionally, too, a well-meaning public official starts losing his head in the cause of efficiency, and thinks himself God Almighty. Such officials are particularly frequent in the Home Office. Well, there will be questions about them in Parliament sooner or later, and then they will have to mind their steps. Whether Parliament is either a representative body or an efficient one is questionable, but I value it because it criticises and talks, and because its chatter gets widely reported.

So Two Cheers for Democracy: one because it admits variety and two because it permits criticism. Two cheers are quite enough: there is no occasion to give three. Only Love the Beloved Republic deserves that.

What about Force, though? While we are trying to be sensitive and advanced and affectionate and tolerant, an unpleasant question pops up: does not all society rest upon force? If a government cannot count upon the police and the army, how can it hope to rule? And if an individual gets knocked on the head or sent to a labour camp, of what significance are his opinions?

This dilemma does not worry me as much as it does some. I realise that all society rests upon force. But all the great creative actions, all the decent human relations, occur during the intervals when force has not managed to come to the front. These intervals are what matter. I want them to be as frequent and as lengthy as possible, and I call them “civilisation.” Some people idealise force and pull it into the foreground and worship it, instead of keeping it in the background as long as possible. I think they make a mistake, and I think that their opposites, the mystics, err even more when they declare that force does not exist. I believe that it exists, and that one of our jobs is to prevent it from getting

out of its box. It gets out sooner or later, and then it destroys us and all the lovely things which we have made. But it is not out all the time, for the fortunate reason that the strong are so stupid. Consider their conduct for a moment in the Niebelung's Ring. The giants there have the guns, or in other words the gold; but they do nothing with it, they do not realise that they are all-powerful, with the result that the catastrophe is delayed and the castle of Walhalla, insecure but glorious, fronts the storms. Fafnir, coiled round his hoard, grumbles and grunts; we can hear him under Europe today; the leaves of the wood already tremble, and the Bird calls its warnings uselessly. Fafnir will destroy us, but by a blessed dispensation he is stupid and slow, and creation goes on just outside the poisonous blast of his breath. The Nietzschean would hurry the monster up, the mystic would say he did not exist, but Wotan, wiser than either, hastens to create warriors before doom declares itself. The Valkyries are symbols not only of courage but of intelligence; they represent the human spirit snatching its opportunity while the going is good, and one of them even finds time to love. Brünnhilde's last song hymns the recurrence of love, and since it is the privilege of art to exaggerate, she goes even further, and proclaims the love which is eternally triumphant and feeds upon freedom, and lives.

So that is what I feel about force and violence. It is, alas! the ultimate reality on this earth, but it does not always get to the front. Some people call its absences "decadence"; I call them "civilisation" and find in such interludes the chief justification for the human experiment. I look the other way until fate strikes me. Whether this is due to courage or to cowardice in my own case I cannot be sure. But I know that if men had not looked the other way in the past, nothing of any value would survive. The people I respect most behave as if they were immortal and as if society was eternal. Both assumptions are false: both of them must be accepted as true if we are to go on eating and working and loving, and are to keep open a few breathing holes for the human spirit. No millennium seems likely to descend upon humanity; no better and stronger League of Nations will be instituted; no form of Christianity and no alternative to Christianity will bring peace to the world or integrity to the individual; no "change of heart" will occur. And yet we need not despair, indeed, we cannot despair; the evidence of history shows us that men have always insisted on behaving creatively under the shadow of the sword; that they have done their artistic and scientific and domestic stuff for the sake of doing it, and that we had better follow their example under the shadow of the aeroplanes. Others, with more vision or courage than myself, see the salvation of humanity ahead, and will dismiss my conception of civilisation as paltry, a sort of tip-and-run game. Certainly it is presumptuous to say that we *cannot* improve, and that Man, who has only been in power for a few thousand years, will never learn to make use of his power. All I mean is that, if people continue to kill one another as they do, the world cannot get better than it is, and that since there are more people

than formerly, and their means for destroying one another superior, the world may well get worse. What is good in people — and consequently in the world — is their insistence on creation, their belief in friendship and loyalty for their own sakes; and though Violence remains and is, indeed, the major partner in this muddled establishment, I believe that creativeness remains too, and will always assume direction when violence sleeps. So, though I am not an optimist, I cannot agree with Sophocles that it were better never to have been born. And although, like Horace, I see no evidence that each batch of births is superior to the last, I leave the field open for the more complacent view. This is such a difficult moment to live in, one cannot help getting gloomy and also a bit rattled, and perhaps short-sighted.

In search of a refuge, we may perhaps turn to hero-worship. But here we shall get no help, in my opinion. Hero-worship is a dangerous vice, and one of the minor merits of a democracy is that it does not encourage it, or produce that unmanageable type of citizen known as the Great Man. It produces instead different kinds of small men — a much finer achievement. But people who cannot get interested in the variety of life and cannot make up their own minds, get discontented over this, and they long for a hero to bow down before and to follow blindly. It is significant that a hero is an integral part of the authoritarian stock-in-trade today. An efficiency-regime cannot be run without a few heroes stuck about it to carry off the dullness — much as plums have to be put into a bad pudding to make it palatable. One hero at the top and a smaller one each side of him is a favourite arrangement, and the timid and the bored are comforted by the trinity, and, bowing down, feel exalted and strengthened.

No, I distrust Great Men. They produce a desert of uniformity around them and often a pool of blood too, and I always feel a little man's pleasure when they come a cropper. Every now and then one reads in the newspapers some such statement as: "The coup d'état appears to have failed, and Admiral Toma's whereabouts is at present unknown." Admiral Toma had probably every qualification for being a Great Man — an iron will, personal magnetism, dash, flair, sexlessness — but fate was against him, so he retires to unknown whereabouts instead of parading history with his peers. He fails with a completeness which no artist and no lover can experience, because with them the process of creation is itself an achievement, whereas with him the only possible achievement is success.

I believe in aristocracy, though — if that is the right word, and if a democrat may use it. Not an aristocracy of power, based upon rank and influence, but an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky. Its members are to be found in all nations and classes, and all through the ages, and there is a secret understanding between them when they meet. They represent the true human tradition, the one permanent victory of our queer race over cruelty and chaos. Thousands of them perish in obscurity, a few are great names. They are

sensitive for others as well as for themselves, they are considerate without being fussy, their pluck is not swankiness but the power to endure, and they can take a joke. I give no examples — it is risky to do that — but the reader may as well consider whether this is the type of person he would like to meet and to be, and whether (going farther with me) he would prefer that this type should *not* be an ascetic one. I am against asceticism myself. I am with the old Scotsman who wanted less chastity and more delicacy. I do not feel that my aristocrats are a real aristocracy if they thwart their bodies, since bodies are the instruments through which we register and enjoy the world. Still, I do not insist. This is not a major point. It is clearly possible to be sensitive, considerate and plucky and yet be an ascetic too, if anyone possesses the first three qualities, I will let him in! On they go — an invincible army, yet not a victorious one. The aristocrats, the elect, the chosen, the Best People — all the words that describe them are false, and all attempts to organise them fail. Again and again Authority, seeing their value, has tried to net them and to utilise them as the Egyptian Priesthood or the Christian Church or the Chinese Civil Service or the Group Movement, or some other worthy stunt. But they slip through the net and are gone; when the door is shut, they are no longer in the room; their temple, as one of them remarked, is the Holiness of the Heart's Affection, and their kingdom, though they never possess it, is the wide-open world.

With this type of person knocking about, and constantly crossing one's path if one has eyes to see or hands to feel, the experiment of earthly life cannot be dismissed as a failure. But it may well be hailed as a tragedy, the tragedy being that no device has been found by which these private decencies can be transmitted to public affairs. As soon as people have power they go crooked and sometimes dotty as well, because the possession of power lifts them into a region where normal honesty never pays. For instance, the man who is selling newspapers outside the Houses of Parliament can safely leave his papers to go for a drink and his cap beside them: anyone who takes a paper is sure to drop a copper into the cap. But the men who are inside the Houses of Parliament — they cannot trust one another like that, still less can the Government they compose trust other governments. No caps upon the pavement here, but suspicion, treachery and armaments. The more highly public life is organised the lower does its morality sink; the nations of today behave to each other worse than they ever did in the past, they cheat, rob, bully and bluff, make war without notice, and kill as many women and children as possible; whereas primitive tribes were at all events restrained by taboos. It is a humiliating outlook — though the greater the darkness, the brighter shine the little lights, reassuring one another, signaling: "Well, at all events, I'm still here. I don't like it very much, but how are you?" Unquenchable lights of my aristocracy! Signals of the invincible army! "Come along — anyway, let's have a good time while we can." I think they signal that too.



The Saviour of the future — if ever he comes — will not preach a new Gospel. He will merely utilise my aristocracy, he will make effective the good will and the good temper which are already existing. In other words, he will introduce a new technique. In economics, we are told that if there was a new technique of distribution, there need be no poverty, and people would not starve in one place while crops were being ploughed under in another. A similar change is needed in the sphere of morals and politics. The desire for it is by no means new; it was expressed, for example, in theological terms by Jacopone da Todi over six hundred years ago. “Ordina questo amore, O tu che m’ami,” he said; “O thou who lovest me — set this love in order.” His prayer was not granted, and I do not myself believe that it ever will be, but here, and not through a change of heart, is our probable route. Not by becoming better, but by ordering and distributing his native goodness, will Man shut up Force into its box, and so gain time to explore the universe and to set his mark upon it worthily. At present he only explores it at odd moments, when Force is looking the other way, and his divine creativeness appears as a trivial by-product, to be scrapped as soon as the drums beat and the bombers hum.

Such a change, claim the orthodox, can only be made by Christianity, and will be made by it in God’s good time: man always has failed and always will fail to organise his own goodness, and it is presumptuous of him to try. This claim — solemn as it is — leaves me cold. I cannot believe that Christianity will ever cope with the present world-wide mess, and I think that such influence as it retains in modern society is due to the money behind it, rather than to its spiritual appeal. It was a spiritual force once, but the indwelling spirit will have to be restated if it is to calm the waters again, and probably restated in a non-Christian form. Naturally a lot of people, and people who are not only good but able and intelligent, will disagree here; they will vehemently deny that Christianity has failed, or they will argue that its failure proceeds from the wickedness of men, and really proves its ultimate success. They have Faith, with a large F. My faith has a very small one, and I only intrude it because these are strenuous and serious days, and one likes to say what one thinks while speech is comparatively free: it may not be free much longer.

The above are the reflections of an individualist and a liberal who has found liberalism crumbling beneath him and at first felt ashamed. Then, looking around, he decided there was no special reason for shame, since other people, whatever they felt, were equally insecure. And as for individualism — there seems no way of getting off this, even if one wanted to. The dictator-hero can grind down his citizens till they are all alike, but he cannot melt them into a single man. That is beyond his power. He can order them to merge, he can incite them to mass-antics, but they are obliged to be born separately, and to die separately, and, owing to these unavoidable termini, will always be running off the totalitarian rails. The memory of birth and the expectation of death always

lurk within the human being, making him separate from his fellows and consequently capable of intercourse with them. Naked I came into the world, naked I shall go out of it! And a very good thing too, for it reminds me that I am naked under my shirt, whatever its colour.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Does man need a "change of heart"? Is man by nature evil?
2. How would Forster resolve a conflict between loyalty to a friend and loyalty to his country? Do you agree?
3. Is Forster a pacifist? What part does force play in the progress of civilization?
4. What does Forster think of Great Men? What aristocracy does he believe in?
5. What is Forster's opinion of democracy? of Christianity?

Jacques Maritain

## A Faith to Live By

*Jacques Maritain, brought up in a French Protestant family, became first a socialist and then, in 1906, a convert to Catholicism. He devoted himself to the study of the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, which, for the past fifty years, he has applied to problems of the modern world. Among his best known books are Art and Scholasticism (1930), True Humanism (1938), Scholasticism and Politics (1940), and Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry (1953). He has taught at Columbia, Toronto, and Princeton.*

A faith to live by? That is the topic of an inquiry I was requested to answer some years ago. I wonder whether these words satisfactorily present the question. What is necessary? What do we desperately need? A faith to live by? Or a faith to live for, a faith to live and die for? Just because our very life is at stake we are compelled to rediscover a faith to live and die for.

In the conception of many of our contemporaries faith, a faith to live by, far from being defined by any intrinsic and incontrovertible truth superior to man and human life, is merely something measured by human feeling or human needs, and destined to comfort human life's intellectual and social order, man's security in gaining possession of the earth and mastery over nature. From the

From *The Nation*, May 17, 1947. By courtesy of the publishers.

time of Descartes and John Locke to the present, faith in God progressively became, for a great number of men, such a faith to live by. Finally, the religious feeling shifted to the cult of man. Our forebears undertook and pursued, with infinite hopefulness, a courageous, stubborn, and bright search for a faith to live by, which was a faith in man. This faith, during some decades, seemed all-powerful and produced splendid, though brittle achievements. The blunt fact is that we have lost faith in man.

What is called today atheistic existentialism is the clearest symptom of this fact. Kirkegaard's existentialism was the anguish of faith searching for incomprehensible and unspeakable reality. Even Heidegger's existentialism searches for the mystery of being through the heartrending experience of nothingness. But atheistic existentialism, such as has been heralded in recent years by writers who are but submissive mirrors of their time, does not reflect the anguish of man confronting nothingness; it reflects and declares the longing of man for nothingness. It expresses the temptation and desire not to be any longer. Yet this is impossible. Longing for nothingness and condemned to be, man abandons himself.

Communism, which is the ultimate vicissitude of anthropocentric rationalism, declares indeed its faith in man and offers itself as the last hope of optimism. Its optimism, however, is the optimism of the titanic and coercive energies of matter and technique; its man is totally subservient to the fate of history embodied in a social group. Faith in man, yes, but in what kind of man? In a collective man who deprives the individual of the liberties of the mind and makes himself into a spurious God emerging from the evolution of matter and the antinomies of history. The real man, the human person, is sacrificed to a devouring idol of the greatness of man.

Well, does despair, then, have the last word? Are we hemmed in by a tragedy?

As a matter of fact, reason demands that we have faith in man. Let us turn from the present world of man and look at the world of nature — I mean with an unsophisticated gaze. We see that, despite the all-pervading law of struggle and conflict, nature in its depths is permeated with an abysmal, supra-individual and inescapable peace, which is the root goodness and the universal strength of being. And man, as part of nature, has an essence which is good in itself. We see that the evolution of the cosmos is a persevering, though constantly thwarted, movement toward higher forms of life and consciousness, which achieves a final victory in the human species and is taken over, within the limits of the latter, by human liberty, and that from the age of the cave man, the slow and painful progress of mankind testifies to energies in man which make any contempt of the human race childish and presumptuous. Consider with a little love any individual whatever in the anonymous common mass of poor humanity. The better you know him, the more you discover in him hidden resources of goodness that evil has been unable to destroy. Man's difficult condition comes from

the fact that he is not only a creature of nature but also one of reason and freedom — elements which are weak in him and yet are his indestructible fortitude and tokens of his abiding dignity. No failures or stains can efface his original greatness.

Yes, we see that we must have faith in man. But we cannot. Our experience keeps reason in check. The present world of man has been for us a revelation of evil; it has shattered our confidence. We have seen too many crimes for which no just revenge can compensate, too many deaths in desperation, too sordid a debasement of human nature. Our vision of man has been covered over by the unforgettable image of the bloody ghosts in extermination camps. Totalitarian craving for power, either Nazi or Communist, feeding on our moral weaknesses, has let devils loose everywhere. Everything we loved seems to have been poisoned; everything in which we trusted seems to have failed. Science and progress are turned to our own destruction. Our very being is threatened by mental and moral atomization. Our very language has been perverted: our words have become ambiguous and seem only able to convey deception. We live in Kafka's world. Where is our faith to live by?

Perhaps we have chosen the wrong road. Perhaps we would have done better to cling to a faith to live and die for, instead of seeking a faith to live by only. Ancient pagan wisdom knew that man's noblest, happiest, and most human aspect is appendant to what is supra-human, and that he can only live by what he lives for and is ready to die for, and what is better than himself. If our humanism has failed, it is perhaps because it was centered in man alone, and was utilitarian, not heroic; because it tried to relegate death and evil to oblivion, instead of facing them and overcoming them by an ascent of the soul into eternal life; because it trusted in techniques instead of in love, I mean in Gospel love.

St. Paul says that faith is the substance of things hoped for and goes on to say that it is a conviction of things not seen. Faith is an adherence to supra-human truth, an entrance into the realm of invisible and divine things; faith makes our whole life appendant to a living Whole which is infinitely better and more lovable than our own life; faith is a meeting with a Person Who is Truth itself and Love itself, and to Whom the giving of oneself results in supreme freedom, and in Whom dying results in indestructible life.

Then we live for truth, and that truth for which we live is stronger than the world. Then we live for love, and that love for which we live has made the world and will finally renew and transfigure it. Then we are free, and nothing in the world can break our faith.

And this God Who is Truth and Love has made man in His image. He has destined man to share in His own life. His Son died to save man. Despite all the catastrophes that man's failures and refusals cause, He leads man's history toward godlike fulfilment and transfiguration. Such is the greatness of man. Here is the rock of our faith in him.

Thus faith in man revives if it is rooted in the supra-human. Faith in man is saved by faith in God.

Human history moves in a definite direction. It depends on both natural and spiritual energies, and among all kinds of conflicts it tends to the natural fulfilment of mankind — namely, the progressive manifestation of the essence and potentialities of man, the progressive development of the structures of his knowledge, his moral conscience, and his social life, mankind's progressive conquest of unity and freedom. And it tends also to a spiritual fulfilment which is supra-temporal and transcends history, and which the Christian considers to be the kingdom of God and the revelation of the sons of God. Though inseparably intermingled, these two trends of history relate to two thoroughly distinct orders, and often the weakness of man opposes the one while furthering the other. And contrary to them, evil also develops in history; so that a downward movement causes losses to increase at the same time as an upward movement causes the sap of the world to produce better fruits. In the happiest periods of history evil is at work obscurely in the bloom of our precarious gardens. In the darkest eras the good is invisibly preparing unforeseeable conquests. And good is stronger than evil. Finally the saying of the Scriptures will be fulfilled: Tell the righteous that all is well. In old Jewish apocalyptic writings it was stated that the age of the sufferings of the Messiah would be the age of his greatest victories.

In presenting his book, *On the Threshold of the Apocalypse*, to one of his readers some thirty years ago, Léon Bloy wrote on the first page: "Cher ami donnez-vous la peine d'entrer" ("Dear friend, pray walk in"). It seems that, as a matter of fact, we did walk in. Our age appears as an apocalyptic age, a liquidation of several centuries of history. We are picking the grapes of wrath. We have not finished suffering. But at the end of the crisis a new world will emerge.

Bearing these thoughts in mind, experience — that very experience which jeopardized our faith in man — is transfigured. It assumes a meaning. It is not the revelation of the absurdity of existence but of the pangs and travail of history, not the revelation of the root baseness and contemptibleness of man but of his distress laid bare when he falls from his pride, and of the trials and catastrophes through which the abiding greatness of his destiny asserts itself.

A historical reckoning such as the one we are undergoing does not take place in one day. Time is necessary to make reason able to control the formidable material means which industrial and technological revolution has put in our frail hands. Time is necessary to stir up, from the depths of human bewilderment, the moral and spiritual revolution that is incomparably more needed than any other revolution. For nothing less is required than a terrestrial triumph of Gospel inspiration in the social behavior of mankind. We do not lose hope. The renewal of civilization that we hope for, the age of integral humanism, the time when science and wisdom are to be reconciled, the advent of a fraternal commonwealth and of true human emancipation — all this we do not await on the

morrow. But we await them on the day after the morrow, on that day which St. Paul announced will be, after the worst darkness, like a springtime of splendor and renovation for the world.\*

Every effort made in this direction will finally bear fruit. I refer not only to the spiritual struggle of those who have heard, as Henri Bergson put it, the call of the hero, and who awaken men to evangelic love, but also to the temporal struggle of all those — scientists, poets, pioneers of social justice — who give themselves to the improvement and illumination of their brothers' lives; I refer to the daily exertion of those who can know no rest as long as their brothers are in enslavement and misery. Even if the general state of the world and our stock of accumulated errors prevent such efforts from overcoming at present the evils which are streaming in from everywhere, they are preparing an era, under God, of greater dignity for man and of expanding love.

Yet even that will be but a moment in the history of a small and perishable planet. And hope goes beyond time. For finally we are waiting for the resurrection of the dead, and life eternal. Such is the faith we live for, and, because we live for it, the faith we live by.

\* Cf. St. Paul, *Rom.*, 11:12, 15.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between a faith to live by and a faith to live for?
2. Why have we lost faith in man? How can we regain it?
3. What is happening during periods of suffering and evil?
4. What is communism's position with regard to faith in man? What is "anthropocentric rationalism"?

Will Herberg

## The Contemporary Upswing in Religion

*Will Herberg is managing editor of the quarterly Judaism and the author of numerous articles about religion in twentieth century America. His Protestant-Catholic-Jew has been called "the most fascinating essay on the religious sociology of America that has appeared in decades." According to Reinhold Niebuhr, "It throws as much light on American society as a whole as it does on the peculiarly religious aspects of American life."*

### I

No one who attempts to see the contemporary religious situation in the United States in perspective can fail to be struck by the extraordinary pervasiveness of religious identification among present-day Americans. Almost everybody in the United States today locates himself in one or another of the three great religious communities. Asked to identify themselves in terms of religious "preference," 95 per cent of the American people, according to a recent public opinion survey, declared themselves to be either Protestants, Catholics, or Jews (68 per cent Protestants, 23 per cent Catholics, 4 per cent Jews); only 5 per cent admitted to no "preference." Some differences, one or two perhaps of real significance, are indicated when these figures are broken down according to race, age, sex, education, occupation, income, region, and degree of urbanization; but, by and large, the conclusion seems to be that virtually the entire body of the American people, in every part of the country and in every section of society, regard themselves as belonging to some religious community. The results of the survey are fully borne out by the reports of informed observers of the American scene.

Such information as that which this survey provides is unfortunately not available for earlier times, and so direct comparison is impossible. But it seems safe to assume that these figures, reflecting the situation in the early 1950s, represent an all-time high in religious identification. Through the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth America knew the militant secularist, the atheist or "free-thinker," as a familiar figure in cultural life, along with considerably larger numbers of "agnostics" who would have nothing to do with churches and refused to identify themselves religiously. These still exist, of course, but their ranks are dwindling and they are becoming more and more inconspicuous, taking the American people as a whole. The "village atheist" is a vanishing figure; Clarence Darrow and Brann the Iconoclast, who once commanded large and excited audiences, have left no successors. Indeed, their kind of anti-religion is virtually meaningless to most Americans today, who

simply cannot understand how one can be "against religion" and for whom some sort of religious identification is more or less a matter of course. This was not always the case; that it is the case today there can be no reasonable doubt. The pervasiveness of religious identification may safely be put down as a significant feature of the America that has emerged in the past quarter of a century.

The figures for church membership tell the same story but in greater detail. Religious statistics in this country are notoriously inaccurate, but the trend is so well marked that it overrides all margins of error. In the quarter of a century between 1926 and 1950 the population of continental United States increased 28.6 per cent; membership of religious bodies increased 59.8 per cent: in other words, church membership grew more than twice as fast as population. Protestants increased 63.7 per cent, Catholics 53.9 per cent, Jews 22.5 per cent. Among Protestants, however, the increase varied considerably as between denominations: Baptist increase was well over 100 per cent, some "holiness" sects grew even more rapidly, while the figure for the Episcopal Church was only 36.7 per cent, for the Methodist Church 32.2 per cent, for the Northern Presbyterians 22.4 per cent, and for the Congregationalists 21.1 per cent. In general, it may be said that "practically all major types of American religion have staged what is vulgarly called a 'comeback'."

In 1950 total church membership was reckoned at 85,319,000, or about 57 per cent of the total population. In 1953 it was recorded as 94,842,000; the percentage now was 59.5, marking an all-time high in the nation's history. Indeed, all available information tends to show that the proportion of the American people religiously affiliated as church members has been consistently growing from the early days of the republic. In his address to the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches, President Eisenhower pointed out that: "Contrary to what many people think, the percentage of our population belonging to churches steadily increases. In a hundred years, that percentage has multiplied more than three times." . . .

## II

That there has in recent years been an upswing of religion in the United States can hardly be doubted; the evidence is diverse, converging, and unequivocal beyond all possibilities of error. It is another matter, however, when we come to assess the factors that have made, and are making, for this notable shift in the social attitudes and cultural climate of our time. When we try to isolate these factors or reveal their mode of operation, we begin to sense the inadequacy of all sociological "explanation" of phenomena that in their very nature transcend the sociological. Nevertheless, it seems to me that certain significant things may be said about the present religious situation which might contribute to an understanding of the current turn to religion in America.

We may proceed with our analysis on various levels. Most generally and com-



prehensively, the rise in religious identification, membership, and attendance would seem to be closely related to the change in social structure of the American community we have described in earlier chapters. America, it was there pointed out, has changed from the "land of immigrants," with its thriving ethnic groups, to the "triple melting pot," in which people tend more and more to identify and locate themselves socially in terms of three great sub-communities — Protestant, Catholic, Jewish — defined in religious terms. To find a place in American society increasingly means to place oneself in one or another of these religious communities. And although this process of self-identification and social location is not in itself intrinsically religious, the mere fact that in order to be "something" one must be either a Protestant, a Catholic, or a Jew means that one begins to think of oneself as religiously identified and affiliated. *Naming* oneself a Protestant, a Catholic, or a Jew carries with it a distinctive attitude to "one's" church, an attitude that is definitely favorable. Since one "is" a Protestant, a Catholic, or a Jew, and recognizes oneself as such, one tends to think of oneself as somehow part of a church and involved in its activities and concerns. Whether one actually joins or not, the inclination is to think of oneself as a member: hence the significant fact that many more people report themselves as members of churches than are on church rolls. And increasingly one does actually become a member and join in the activities of the church; increasingly too the children are sent to church and church school — for many reasons, not least, however, because "the church supplies a place where children come to learn what they are." There does not seem to be any real question that the restructuring of American society that emerges with the third generation has been a major factor in the turn to religion so characteristic of our time.

Another factor of prime sociological importance has worked toward the same end, and that is the basic change in character structure that seems to be under way among certain sections of the American people. The reference here is to the shift from inner-direction to other-direction, which David Riesman has analyzed and documented so impressively. Riesman, it will be recalled, distinguishes three types of character structure — tradition-directed, inner-directed, and other-directed — which he finds predominating at different times in different societies yet also entering in different degrees into contemporary American life. Tradition-direction, in which each generation receives from its predecessor and internalizes for itself a fairly fixed pattern of folkways, is characteristic of primitive and stable peasant societies; it has never really been part of the ongoing life of a dynamic society such as ours, although the collapse of tradition-direction upon the peasant immigrant's first encounter with the New World has had repercussions into our own time. American society has hitherto been, and still is, predominantly inner-directed; each succeeding generation internalizes not a traditional pattern of folkways but a set of "goals" or "principles," to which

the individual is kept true by a powerful inner drive. Borrowing a figure from Gardner Murphy, Riesman pictures the inner-directed man as operating with a kind of built-in gyroscope which holds him steadily, sometimes ruthlessly, to his course, driving ahead for the fulfillment of his purposes. The inner-directed man is work-conscious, intent upon achievement, not afraid to stand on his own feet and if necessary against the crowd, interested in "results" not in "personalities." It is the inner-directed man who has been characteristic of American life and achievement so far.

Lately, however, for reasons that are still obscure though we are beginning to get some inkling of them, there has been emerging on certain levels another character type, described as other-directed. Instead of possessing a built-in gyroscope to keep him true to his course, the other-directed man operates with a kind of built-in radar apparatus which is ceaselessly at work receiving signals from the person's "peer group" and adjusting him to the situation indicated by these signals. The other-directed man is a man who is concerned with adjustment rather than with achievement; he is personality-conscious rather than work-conscious, bland, tolerant, co-operative, "civilized" — but dreadfully afraid of being too "different," of getting too much out of line with his "peer group." Indeed, the greatest horror of the other-directed man, that which renders him so acutely uncomfortable, is to feel "unadjusted" and "unsociable" ("anti-social"); whereas the inner-directed man, as we have seen, is always ready to stand up against his environment and indeed seems to get a kind of grim satisfaction out of doing so. The "morality" of the inner-directed type becomes "morale" for the other-directed; "character" becomes "personality"; moral indignation and intolerance give way to a kind of all-embracing tolerance — tolerance of everything and everybody except the "unadjusted" and the "anti-social." The operative law of life of the other-directed man is conformity and adjustment; the built-in radar that characterizes other-direction sees to it that such adjustment to a fluctuating environment is generally achieved quite unconsciously and is therefore invested with the emotional power of unconscious motivation.

In America today, though inner-direction remains dominant, other-direction has already become prevalent in the new suburban middle-class society consisting of professionals and junior executives, and seems bound to spread upward and downward in the social hierarchy. The emergence of this type, and its growing prominence in the community, bring with it a number of far-reaching consequences for the social and cultural life of our time.

In particular, it is not difficult to see the current turn to religion and the church as, in part at least, a reflection of the growing other-directedness of our middle-class culture. The people in the suburbs want to feel psychologically secure, adjusted, at home in their environment; the very character structure that makes this so urgent a necessity for them also operates to meet the need. Being

religious and joining a church is, under contemporary American conditions, a fundamental way of "adjusting" and "belonging"; through the built-in radar apparatus of other-direction it becomes almost automatic as an obvious social requirement, like entertaining or culture. The vogue of Van Gogh and Renoir reproductions in the suburban home and the rising church affiliation of the suburban community may not be totally unconnected; both may, without disparagement, be interpreted, in part at least, as the consequence of the craving for adjustment and conformity involved in other-direction. The right kind of art reproductions testify to one's being adjusted to the culture of one's "peer-group"; belonging to the church is experienced as the most satisfactory form of social "belonging." The trend toward religious identification and church affiliation may thus to an extent be a reflection of the growing need for conformity and sociability that the drift to other-direction brings with it.

The operations of other-direction fall in rather neatly with the over-all effects of the restructuring of American society in terms of religious community. To identify and locate oneself in the social context is a requirement under all conditions; it becomes particularly pressing and urgent under conditions of other-direction, since other-direction craves conformity and adjustment as a veritable necessity of life. On the other hand, the other-directed need for "belonging" finds its most direct and appropriate expression in present-day America in identifying oneself with a religious community and joining a church. Whether we approach it from one direction or the other the result seems to be the same: a marked trend toward religious identification and church affiliation.

These more obviously sociological factors ought not, however, to obscure other, perhaps less definable, forces operating at other levels of human life. The contemporary crisis of Western civilization, which has brought a sense of total insecurity to men everywhere, is surely one of the most significant of these. The utter predicament of human existence is no longer simply a philosophical or theological proposition; it is the most patent of everyday facts. The hydrogen bomb, on which our survival depends, yet which threatens us with destruction, is the sinister symbol of our plight. Confronted with the demonic threat of Communist totalitarianism, we are driven to look beyond the routine ideas and attitudes that may have served in easier times. On every side insecurity assails us, and yet security is becoming more and more the urgent need of our time.

In this situation of pervasive crisis and danger, religion appeals to many as "synonymous with peace," indeed as offering the "best hope of peace in the world today" — "peace of mind" for the individual amid the anxieties and confusions of contemporary existence, peace for the nation in the life-and-death struggle with Communism. Particularly in this latter conflict religion commends itself as our greatest resource and most powerful "secret weapon." In the week

in which I write this three outstanding clerical leaders of the three religious communities of the nation made eloquent pleas for religion on this ground: one called religion the "shield of the nation"; the other proclaimed it as "more powerful than the H-bomb"; the third recommended it as "America's strongest weapon against atheistic Communism." Even erstwhile secularists are beginning to see things in a new light; the *Zeitgeist* has not been without effect among them, nor the urgencies of the present world situation. They are beginning to show a growing appreciation of the social utility of religion for Western culture, especially in fighting Communism. Quite a few old-time secularists are no longer so sure that religion is on its way out; nor for that matter are they so sure that they would be happy to see religion go, for when religion goes (many secularists now ruefully admit), it is only too often replaced not by "reason" and "enlightenment" but by one or another of the wild superstitions and demonic cults that the modern age has spawned. Religion has suddenly emerged as a major power in the "hundred years of Cold War" that appears to confront mankind.

On another, more personal, or rather more domestic, level, too, religion has been found to serve the need for security. On this level the turn to religion is to be linked, many think, with the sensational reversal of long-time population trends and the sudden rise of birth rates among college graduates and professional people in the United States. Since 1946 these rates have been increasing every year, and in 1954 married graduates of the class of 1944, ten years out of college, already averaged more children than the class of 1921 when it had been out twenty-five years in 1946, the year the study we are citing was initiated. This demographical fact would seem to confirm the impression many observers have had in recent years that, amid the mounting insecurities of our time, increasing numbers of younger people are turning to the security to be found in the enduring, elemental ways and institutions of mankind; in the family, they feel, they can find the permanence and stability, the meaning and value they crave amid a world falling into chaos. Religion, like the family, is one of the enduring, elemental institutions of mankind; indeed, the two have been closely linked from the very earliest times. The search for meaning and security in what is basic and unchanging, rather than in the fluctuating fortunes of social or political activity, is one of the major factors in the upswing of religion among the American people today.

It is perhaps not without significance that the Oak Ridge community in Tennessee, consisting largely of atomic scientists and technicians with their families, has shown little interest in the political status of the community but an intense concern for building religious institutions. Early in 1953 the Oak Ridgers, by a big majority, turned down a proposal for local autonomy and voted to let the AEC continue operation of their municipal services. But, as the report points out, that was not because they were apathetic or regarded themselves as transients at Oak Ridge; rather it was because they saw the "key" of

their family and community development in the development of their churches. The first meeting to establish a church was held in 1943, within a few weeks after the launching of the Oak Ridge project; in 1953, ten years later, Oak Ridge, with a population of 31,000, had thirty-seven different congregations holding regular services and performing the multiform functions of the American church. Building activity was still going on, in many cases church members performing part of the work with their own hands. For Oak Ridge, though a prosperous community, had no rich people to endow churches or make huge contributions; everything had to be done by the people themselves. "While residents here feel that Oak Ridge still has some years to go before it can completely cut its municipal ties with the federal government," the report concludes, "most of them agree that in the religious growth here, the community's roots are very definitely showing." In the Oak Ridge scheme of priorities religion and the church obviously rank at the top, along with the home and the school. It is surely of considerable import that this age-old trinity of American life — the home, the church, and the school — should find so impressive a rebirth in this most modern of communities of the atomic age.

Personal need enters into the present religious situation in still another way. Confronted with the depersonalizing pressures of contemporary life, modern man experiences a profound exigency to preserve some remnant of personality and inwardness against the erosions of a mass culture. Increasingly, he turns to religion to provide him an inexpugnable citadel for the self in a world in which personal authenticity is threatened on every side; indeed, the quest for personal authenticity is itself substantially a religious quest. Reflecting, as it does, the crisis of our time, it also points to its deeper meaning. For ultimately, the crisis of our time is a crisis of faith. The secular faiths of our culture have ignominiously collapsed under the shattering impact of the events of our time. Many of the "truths" by which "modern-minded" men lived in earlier decades have revealed themselves to be little more than vain and fatuous illusions. We can no longer look to science, to "progress," to economics, or to politics for salvation; we recognize that these things have their value, but we also know that they are not gods bringing redemption from the confusions and perils of existence. An age intoxicated with utopian dreams about the boundless possibilities of "scientific progress" and "social reconstruction" has been succeeded by an age more sober, more realistic — some would say too much so. But one cannot live by sober, limited, pragmatic programs for restricted ends; these soon lose whatever meaning they have unless they are embedded in a transcendent, actuality-defying vision. Man needs faith, a total, all-embracing faith, for living. The faiths by which men live in a secular age "base the meaning of existence upon some assumed stability of human virtue or reason [or power], some pattern of history or societal security"; when these are swept away by the great upheavals of history, the way is opened for a better appreciation of the power and

relevance of the historic faiths. How far turning to these faiths at a time of crisis represents "escapism" in the bad sense of the term, and how far it reflects a deeper searching for the realities of existence, no one can tell for another, perhaps not even for himself; we may safely assume that something of each is present, compounded with the other. But that it is not simply irresponsibility or a "failure of nerve," that it may indeed help to nerve one for greater endurance and unyielding resistance to evil and unreason, is surely sufficiently attested by the events of our time. At its deepest level the turn to religion we are witnessing owes much of its force to the search for a new and more viable "philosophy" of existence amid the spiritual chaos of our age.

1. Cite two reasons given by Herberg for the increasing interest in religion and church affiliation.
2. How is the change from "inner-directed" to "other-directed" character related to the upswing in religion?
3. What three institutions are most important in the community of Oak Ridge?
4. What effect has the world political crisis had upon our religious attitudes? What is hoped for from religion in the international sphere?

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION IV

1. List different kinds of evidence presented in these articles. Which kind do you consider most effective? Which articles seem most convincing? Why?
2. Compare the organizations of the selections by Lodge, Little, Steinbeck, Wechsberg, and Herberg. Which are more formal, more carefully outlined? What considerations might affect the organization of an opinion piece?
3. Find what you consider the chief argument in several of these articles and note its location in the piece (beginning, middle, or end). Why in each case has the author placed his strongest argument in this position?
4. Study Bush, Barzun, Jackson, Little, and Riesman for treatment of possible arguments by an opponent. Which of these authors seems fairest to his opponent? Which, if any, seem unfair? Quote passages in support of your conclusions.
5. Compare the overall treatment of similar subject matter in Russell and Kennan (international relations); Porter and Cole (marriage); Pusey and Bush (education); Forster and Maritain (faith). What differences stand out? To what extent are the authors' personalities reflected in these essays?
6. Compare the style in the various opinion pieces — the choice of words, complexity of sentences, length of paragraphs, tone, etc. Which author, in your opinion, has the best style for controversy and argument? Why?
7. State in a sentence the main idea of each article. In which articles is the main idea stated, or implied, at the beginning? at the end? in the title?
8. Find passages in these articles where the writer is appealing to his reader's emotions. What emotion in each case? Were you more convinced by such passages than by statistics?

9. Find passages which “date” some of these articles (e.g., references to the Suez crisis in Barbara Ward’s). Will the main ideas remain valid? How can a writer make his opinion piece both timely and of permanent interest? Which of these articles will be valuable ten years from now?

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Write a letter in answer to any one of these opinion articles, taking issue with either the main idea or an important point. Study “Letters to the Editor” in current newspapers or magazines.
2. Write an essay of opinion on some phase of any of the following topics:

a program for world peace  
 the ideal wife, husband, or teacher  
 working wives, domesticated husbands  
 good and evil in the average human being  
 a good education  
 the best use of leisure time  
 a solution to the problem of race relations  
 what your religion does for you

3. Using the interview method of collecting material, as in “Are College Men Boys?”, write an article on one of the following topics:

what today’s younger generation expects of life  
 foreign students’ impressions of American life  
 whether fraternities (sororities) are undemocratic  
 pros and cons of going steady  
 what football does for the player (or, the college)  
 whether too much studying is required in college

4. Write a personal essay, like Steinbeck’s, in which you start with some common activity or object (fishing, mountain climbing, a seashell, a cloud, a leaf, etc.) and arrive at a statement of your philosophy of life

5. Write a prophecy of what college could be like twenty years from now, basing your conjectures on the articles by Drucker, Pusey, Bush, Riesman, and anything else you have read along these lines. You might use your imagination to construct an ideal university, or to satirize the possibly appalling conditions.

6. Write a theme on whatever annoys you most: for example, dormitory food, red tape, censorship, television commercials, gossip, etc. Include some constructive criticism.

7. After reading Bush on “The Humanities,” write an account of what one particular course in high school did, or did not do, for you. Or compare two courses, such as biology and Latin.

8. Write a “debunking” article, like Barzun’s or Capp’s, on some established practice or tradition (final examinations, coeducation, smoking, golf, etc.).

9. On the basis of Cole’s “American Youth Goes Monogamous” write an essay, like Russell’s, on “The Future of American Marriage (or, Family Life).”

10. Write an editorial warning against a specific danger (campus, local or national) such as censorship, inflation, standardization, etc. Tell how this danger can be avoided.

## SECTION

# VI

## RESEARCH

The word “research” may call up a romantic vision of test tubes and microbe hunters, or a prosaic one of dry scholars in dusty library stacks. Actually, a “research” article resembles the explanatory and opinion pieces in being based on facts; it differs from them in giving the sources of the facts in footnotes.

Thus, a “research” or “library” theme is not a totally different *kind* of writing. Usually it contains both explanation and opinion (your interpretation of the facts). And although the readers of such papers consist largely of scientists and professors, they are — believe it or not — still human beings. They are pleased when you present your material with conspicuous clarity; if you condescend to crack a joke — to entertain as well as instruct them — a wintry smile will creep across their rockbound features. You may find various explanatory or opinion devices useful, such as the list of numbered steps recommended for explaining some process, or the fair statement of an interpretation different from yours where there is controversy.

Assuming that you have collected the material for a library theme (your grammar handbook tells you how), how are you going to write it up? How breathe life into those clues you have tracked down in the labyrinths of the library with something of the satisfaction, we hope, of a detective?

Take Mencken’s “The American Language” in this section of research selections. His initial sentence suggests our first “rule.” Here it is: “With the possible exception of the French, the Americans now produce more slang than any other people, and put it to heavier use in their daily affairs.” Since the rest of his selection brings out the liveliness and wealth of American slang, from the earliest period at which it became distinctively American, we may say that Mencken *has a thesis, a main idea*, which his facts put across. You should do the same, not simply pile up statistics and statements meaningless in themselves. What is the importance of the theory you are explaining? What significance do you find



in the famous battle, campaign, or election that you are writing about? Let the reader know — and soon.

Although Mencken is writing about philology, you'd never guess it. Most philological articles are written half in phonetic symbols lik *thēz* and half in polysyllabic words dealing with diaeresis and antonomasia. Mencken leaves them to the professors and *brings out the human interest in his material*. How? By quoting the slang terms for "drunk," "girl," and other phenomena of popular appeal; by introducing *conflict* — the horror of the "educated," especially educated English people, at American coinages; and by clever, humorous writing (sometimes American slang is "belabored as intolerably vulgar, indecent and against God . . . sometimes it is sneered at . . . as when Allan Monkhouse demanded piously 'What is the good of all this?' "). You can find equally interesting material on your subject, and can try to equal Mencken's writing instead of introducing a quotation by some banal phrase like "Allan Monkhouse says, quote, 'What is the good of all this?' "

Of course, Mencken's research selection has footnotes, but not so many that it looks like a fine-print encyclopedia. He is *economical, adequate, and literate in his references to sources*. Economical (average three and one half footnotes per page in the original), but adequate (a source for every slang expression quoted); and literate, so that you enjoy even the footnotes in this paper (e.g., "Rose's aim is the lowly one of aiding writers of pulp fiction. . . . Thus the fictioneer who yearns to give verisimilitude to his otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative may learn readily what college students call a library or a lavatory, and how hoboes distinguish between the professional levels of their trade.") Notice, also, that he uses the footnote skillfully to give bibliographical information (footnote 7), including bibliography of a field not treated in his text (footnote 27). If you study Mencken's piece, you can learn how to acknowledge quotations and specific facts in a concise, readable way.

Finally, *at the end* of his book *The American Language*, although not at the end of this brief selection from it, Mencken does not hesitate to *give his own judgment on his material*. He writes a chapter on the future of American English. He argues, from the challenge it has already made to British English, that it will grow increasingly stronger, in spite of defects which he frankly enumerates. At the end of your library theme you should restate, and probably elaborate on, your thesis in the same way.

If you have a *thesis*, bring out the *human interest* in your material, keep your *footnotes under control*, and give the reader your *judgment at the end* — will your professors be impressed?

We hope so. To keep them, and you, from getting too tense about footnotes, we have included Frank Sullivan's hilarious parody, "A Garland of Ibids." Until they got him down at the end, Mr. Sullivan had his footnotes eating out of his hand, as the following indicates: "Henry Adams, author of 'The Educa-

tion of Henry Adams,' by Henry Adams. Not to be confused with Henry Adams, Samuel Adams, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Abigail Adams, Charles Edward Adams (not to be confused with Charles Francis Adams, Charles Henry Adams, or Henry Adams), Maude Adams, Franklin Pierce Adams, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Bristow Adams, George Matthew Adams, James Truslow Adams, Adams Express, Adams & Flanagan, Horace Flanagan, or Louis Adamic."

Actually, Sullivan's parody is also a good demonstration of how *not* to use footnotes. For example, the unnecessary footnote (<sup>4</sup> — identifying a well-known writer, Emerson); the footnote of too detailed information (<sup>6</sup> — two hundred words of minutiae on Thoreau); the far-fetched explanatory footnote (<sup>13</sup> — Louisa May Alcott's astigmatism dragged in, unconnected with anything discussed in the text); and the footnote that shouldn't be a footnote at all but a part of the text, since it contains really important information: the name of the author Sullivan is writing about! (<sup>2</sup>)

Wecter's "The Age of the Great Depression," like Mencken's selection, is a serious but interesting piece of research. Wecter differs from Mencken, however, in his presentation of material and handling of sources. He does not emphasize certain popular aspects of his subjects (as Mencken emphasized army and college slang) nor introduce conflict, but relies upon sheer accumulation of facts (statistics, personalities, trends) which are in themselves unusually interesting. He can do this because his subject is not philology but American sports and recreation a few years ago. His book *might* be dull to someone in the twenty-first century, or someone in an isolated part of the world today; but to most of us the words *Joe Louis*, *Ely Culbertson*, *jitterbug*, *Lone Ranger*, etc. don't need any introduction or explanation. He does, however, have a clear-cut organization, by different fields of entertainment. If you have a current subject this interesting, in which the facts speak for themselves, be sure to be careful about your arrangement, too.

As for his acknowledgment of sources, this is done in more of a bibliographical fashion, as you can see at the end of the selection. Again, this is because of the nature of his subject. Most of his facts are well known, can be verified in a number of newspapers or almanacs — so it isn't so important which almanac or paper he cites; but a reader might want to know the best sources for each of the many *fields* of recreation treated within the chapter, so he classifies his bibliography very carefully to make up for the omission of footnotes. (A good exercise for you, incidentally, would be to supply hypothetical footnotes for the most specific facts and for any quotations; see if you agree with your classmates or instructor on which should be footnoted.)

Research is probably an acquired taste, and the footnote about as palatable to the average reader as wilted spinach. "Why bother? Who wants to read them?" he wonders. But research is not just dull grubbing in a library with the

sunshine barred out; if you read such great products of research as John Livingston Lowes' *Road to Xanadu* (exploration of a poet's imagination) or Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (never more timely than today, in our world-wide crisis), you will discover that what the dusty investigators are digging for is the pure ore of truth and knowledge. While you hunt for this treasure through the library stacks — and while you try to write down, intelligibly and interestingly, what you have found — you are one of this noble company.

*H. L. Mencken is a Baltimore newspaperman, satirist, and social critic who became famous during the 1920's for his onslaught against Puritanism and censorship. "I believe in free speech up to the last limits of the unendurable," he has said. He has also recorded himself as "a complete skeptic" and a believer in "the strict limitation of governmental powers." His ideas may be found in his volumes of essays and reminiscence (Prejudices, 1924, Happy Days, 1940, etc.) and in his contributions to the Baltimore Sunpapers, the American Mercury (during the years 1924-33 when he edited it), and other periodicals. The American Language, "a serious study which has . . . the Mencken sparkle," is the best seller among his books.*

With the possible exception of the French, the Americans now produce more slang than any other people, and put it to heavier use in their daily affairs. But they entered upon its concoction relatively late, and down to the second decade of the Nineteenth Century they were content to take their supply from England. American slang, says George Philip Krapp, "is the child of the new nationalism, the new spirit of joyous adventure that entered American life after the close of the War of 1812."<sup>1</sup> There was, during the colonial and early republican periods, a great production of neologisms, as we have seen in Chapter III, but very little of it was properly describable as slang. I find *to boost*, defined as to raise up, to lift up, to exalt, in the glossary appended to David Humphreys's "The Yankey in England," 1815,<sup>2</sup> but all the other slang terms listed, e.g., *duds* for clothes, *spunk* for courage, and *uppish*, are in Francis Grose's "Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue," published in London thirty years before. The Rev. John Witherspoon's denunciation of slang in "The Druid," 1781, is a denunciation of English slang, though he is discussing the speech habits of Americans. But with the great movement into the West, following the War of 1812, the American vulgate came into its own, and soon the men of the ever-receding frontier were pouring out a copious stream of neologisms, many of them showing the audacious fancy of true slang. When these novelties penetrated to the East they produced a sort of linguistic shock, and the finicky were as much upset by the "tall talk" in which they were embodied as English pedants are today by the slang of Hollywood. That some of them were extremely extravagant is a fact: I need point only to *blustiferous*, *clam-jamphrie*, *conbobberation*, *helliferocious*, *molla-*

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<sup>1</sup> Is American English Archaic? *Southwest Review*, Summer, 1927, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> The first example in the Supplement to the Oxford Dictionary is from John Neal's Brother Jonathan, 1825.

*gausauger*, *peedoodles*, *ripsnaptiously*, *slangwhanger*, *sockdolager*, to *exflunctify*, to *flummuck*, to *giraffe*, to *hornswoggle*, to *obflisticate* and to *puckerstopple*.<sup>3</sup> Most of these, of course, had their brief days and then disappeared, but there were others that got into the common vocabulary and still survive, e.g., *blizzard*, to *hornswoggle*, *sockdolager* and *rambunctious*, the last-named the final step in a process which began with *robustious* and ran through *rumbustious* and *rambustious* in England before Americans took a hand in it. With them came many verb-phrases, e.g., to *pick a crow with*, to *cut one's eye-teeth*, to *go the whole hog*. This "tall talk," despite the horror of the delicate, was a great success in the East, and its salient practitioners — for example, David Crockett — were popular heroes. Its example encouraged the production of like neologisms everywhere, and by 1840 the use of slang was very widespread. It is to those days before the Civil War that we owe many of the colorful American terms for strong drink, still current, e.g., *panther-sweat*, *nose-paint*, *red-eye*, *corn-juice*, *forty-rod*, *mountain-dew*, *coffin-varnish*, *bust-head*, *stagger-soup*, *tonsil-paint*, *squirrel-whiskey* and so on, and for drunk, e.g., *boiled*, *canned*, *cock-eyed*, *frazzled*, *fried*, *oiled*, *ossified*, *pifflicated*, *pie-eyed*, *plastered*, *snozzled*, *stewed*, *stuccoed*, *tanked*, *woozy*.<sup>4</sup> "Perhaps the most striking difference between British and American slang," says Krapp,<sup>5</sup> "is that the former is more largely merely a matter of the use of queer-sounding words, like *bally* and *swank*, whereas American slang suggests vivid images and pictures." This was hardly true in the heyday of "tall talk," but that it is true now is revealed by a comparison of current English and American college slang. The vocabulary of Oxford and Cambridge seems inordinately obvious and banal to an American undergraduate. At Oxford it is made up in large part of a series of childish perversions of common and proper nouns, effected by adding *-er* or inserting *gg*. Thus, breakfast becomes *brekker*, collection becomes *collecker*, the Queen Street Cinema becomes the *Queener*, St. John's becomes *Jaggers* and the Prince of Wales becomes the *Pagger-Wagger*. The rest of the vocabulary is equally feeble. To match the magnificent American *lounge-lizard* the best the Oxonians can achieve is *a bit of a lad*, and in place of the multitudinous American synonyms for *girl*<sup>6</sup> there are only *bint* and a few other such flabby inventions.<sup>7</sup> All college slang, of course, borrows heavily from

<sup>3</sup> For these examples I am indebted to M. M. Mathews, who prints a longer list in *The Beginnings of American English*; Chicago, 1931, pp. 114–15.

<sup>4</sup> For a much longer list see *Slang Synonyms for Drunk*, by Manuel Prenner, *American Speech*, Dec., 1928.

<sup>5</sup> *The English Language in America*; New York, 1925, Vol. I, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> There is a list of them in *English Words and Their Background*, by George H. McKnight; New York, 1923, p. 61.

<sup>7</sup> I am indebted here to Mr. Hiram D. Blauvelt. The literature dealing with American college slang begins with *A Collection of College Words and Customs*, by B. H. Hall; Cambridge, Mass., 1851. Its contents are summarized in *College Slang of a Century Ago*, by Joseph C. Smith, *Delta Kappa Epsilon Quarterly*, May, 1933. For the slang in vogue at the beginning of the present century see *College Words and Phrases*, by Eugene H. Babbitt, *Dialect Notes*, Vol. II, Pt. I, 1900, a very valuable compilation. For later periods see *College Slang*, by M. C. McPhee, *American Speech*, Dec., 1927, and *College Abbreviations*, by W. E. Schultz, the same, Feb., 1930. There are many monographs on the slang of definite colleges, for ex-

the general slang vocabulary. For example, *chicken*, which designated a young girl on most American campuses until 1921 or thereabout,<sup>8</sup> was used by Steele in 1711, and, in the form of *no chicken*, by Swift in 1720. It had acquired a disparaging significance in the United States by 1788, as the following lines show:

From visiting bagnios, those seats of despair,  
Where *chickens* will call you *my duck* and *my dear*  
In hopes that your purse may fall to their share,  
Deliver me! <sup>9</sup>

Like the vulgar language in general, popular American slang has got very little sober study from the professional philologists. The only existing glossary of it by a native scholar — “A Dictionary of American Slang,” by Maurice H. Weseen, associate professor of English at the University of Nebraska — is an extremely slipshod and even ridiculous work.<sup>10</sup> There are several collections by laymen, but most of them are still worse.<sup>11</sup> The best, and by far, is “Slang Today and Yesterday,” by Eric Partridge,<sup>12</sup> which deals principally with English slang, but also has a valuable section on American slang. All the dictionaries of Americanisms, of course, include words reasonably describable as slang, but they appear only incidentally, and not in large numbers. Thornton, for example, bars out a great deal of interesting and amusing material by confining his researches to written records. In England the literature of the subject is far more extensive.

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ample: College Slang Words and Phrases From Bryn Mawr College, by Howard J. Savage, *Dialect Notes*, Vol. V, Pt. V, 1922; Colgate University Slang, by J. A. Russell, *American Speech*, Feb., 1930; A Babylonish Cruise [Girard College], by Carroll H. Frey, *Steel and Garnet* Dec., 1922; Johns Hopkins Jargon, by J. Louis Kuethe, *American Speech*, June, 1932; Kansas University Slang, by Carl Pingry and Vance Randolph, the same, Feb., 1928; Midshipman Jargon, by Mary B. Peterson, the same, Aug., 1928; Negro Slang in Lincoln University, by Hugh Sebastian, the same, Dec., 1934; University of Missouri Slang, by Virginia Carter, the same, Feb., 1931; Slang at Smith, by M. L. Farrand, *Delineator*, Oct., 1920; Stanford Expressions, by W. R. Morse, *American Speech*, March, 1927; Stanfordiana, by John A. Shidler and R. M. Clarke, Jr., the same, Feb., 1932; More Stanford Expressions, by John A. Shidler, the same, Aug., 1932; and College Slang Words and Phrases From Western Reserve University, *Dialect Notes*, Vol. IV, Pt. III, 1915.

<sup>8</sup> I take the date from Slang Today and Yesterday, by Eric Partridge; 2nd ed.; London, 1935, p. 429. Partridge says that it was displaced, at least for a time, by the English *flapper*.

<sup>9</sup> The Married Man's Litany, *New Hampshire Spy*, June 10. I am indebted for the quotation to Dr. James Truslow Adams.

<sup>10</sup> New York, 1934. Dr. Weseen seems to be uncertain about the meaning of the word *slang*. He extends it to embrace trade and class argots, the technical vocabularies of various arts and mysteries, common mispronunciations, and the general body of nonce-words. On what theory does he hold that *A No. 1*, *boss*, and *close call* are slang? Or *chaw*, *snoot* and *coupla*? Or *cold snap*, *eternal triangle* and *dead as a doornail*? Or *moron*, *journalese* and *Hoosier*? Or such painful artificialities as *Emersonthusiast*, *mound mainstay* (“the chief pitcher for a baseball team”), and *powerphobe* (“a person who fears the political power of public companies”). Some of his definitions are howlers, as, for example, “an uncouth person” for *leatherneck* (Tell it to the Marines!), and “the home of a newly married couple” — just that, and nothing more — for *love-nest*.

<sup>11</sup> For example, A Thesaurus of Slang, by Howard N. Rose; New York, 1934. Rose's aim is the lowly one of aiding writers of pulp fiction. The ordinary English words are listed alphabetically, and the equivalents in slang or argot follow them. Thus the fictioneer who yearns to give verisimilitude to his otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative may learn readily what college students call a library or a lavatory, and how hoboes distinguish between the professional levels of their trade.

<sup>12</sup> 2nd ed.; London, 1935. It contains a long and interesting history of modern slang, and separate chapters on various varieties of cant and argot.

It began in the Sixteenth Century with the publication of several vocabularies of thieves' argot, and has been enriched in recent years by a number of valuable works, notably the Partridge volume just cited, "Slang, Phrase and Idiom in Colloquial English and Their Use," by Thomas R. G. Lyell,<sup>13</sup> and the monumental "Slang and Its Analogues," by John S. Farmer and W. E. Henley.<sup>14</sup> Before the completion of the last-named, the chief authorities on English slang were "A Dictionary of Slang, Jargon and Cant," by Albert Barrère and Charles G. Leland,<sup>15</sup> and "A Dictionary of Modern Cant, Slang and Vulgar Words," by J. C. Hotten.<sup>16</sup> Relatively little attention is paid to slang in the philological journals, but it is frequently discussed in the magazines of general circulation and in the newspapers.<sup>17</sup> When the English papers denounce Americanisms, which is very often, it is commonly slang that arouses their most violent dudgeon. This dudgeon, of course, is grounded upon its very success: the American movies and talkies have implanted American slang in England even more copiously than they have implanted more decorous American neologisms. As the *Spectator* was saying lately, its influence "on the British Empire continues, ever more rapidly, to increase — a portent frequently mentioned and almost as frequently deplored."<sup>18</sup> Sometimes it is belabored as intolerably vulgar, indecent and against God, as when the *Christian World*<sup>19</sup> blamed it for the prevalence of "dishonest and debased thought" and ascribed its use to "a sneaking fear and dislike of calling beautiful things by their beautiful names and of calling ugly things by their ugly names"; sometimes it is sneered at as empty and puerile, signifying nothing, as when Allan Monkhouse<sup>20</sup> demanded piously "What is the good of all this?" and answered "Such words are the ghosts of old facetiousness, and the world would be better without them"; and sometimes efforts are made to dispose of it by proving that it is all stolen from England, as when Dr. C. T. Onions, one of the editors of the Oxford Dictionary, offered to show a London reporter that the dictionary listed any American slang term he could

<sup>13</sup> Tokyo, 1931.

<sup>14</sup> In seven volumes; London, 1890–1904. This huge work is mainly devoted to cant, but it also contains a great deal of English and American slang. About 15,000 terms are listed. In many cases there are dated quotations, but the dates are not always accurate. In his preface Farmer promised to include a bibliography, a vocabulary of foreign slang, and a study of comparative slang, but this intention seems to have been abandoned. An abridgment in one volume by the same authors appeared in London in 1905. Farmer alone printed a Dictionary of Americanisms in London in 1889. It included relatively little slang.

<sup>15</sup> In two volumes; London, 1889–90. It listed about 4800 terms, and like *Slang and Its Analogues* was privately printed. There was a second edition in 1897.

<sup>16</sup> Usually called simply the *Slang Dictionary*. The first edition appeared in London in 1859. There were later editions in 1860, 1864, and 1874, and many reprints.

<sup>17</sup> The more respectable literature, running down to 1922, is listed in *A Bibliography of Writings on the English Language*, by Arthur G. Kennedy; Cambridge and New Haven, 1927, p. 419 ff. There is a briefer bibliography in the third edition of the present work; New York, 1928, p. 463 ff. For the period since 1922 the bibliographies printed in each issue of *American Speech* and annually in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association* are useful, though they are far from complete.

<sup>18</sup> In a review of the *Wessex Dictionary of American Slang*, March 15, 1935.

<sup>19</sup> May 14, 1931.

<sup>20</sup> *American Slang*, *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, March 8, 1935.

name.<sup>21</sup> Alas, for Dr. Onions, after making good with *to grill, fresh, to figure* (in the sense of to conclude), *bunkum* (he apparently forgot its clearly American origin) and *rake-off* (he had to fall back upon an American example), he came to grief with *boloney* and *nerts*. One of the favorite forms of this latter enterprise is a letter to the editor announcing the discovery that this or that locution, lately come into popularity by way of the talkies, is to be found in Shakespeare,<sup>22</sup> or the Authorized Version of the Bible, or maybe even in Piers Plowman. There are also the specialists who devote themselves to demonstrating that American slang is simply a series of borrowings from the Continental languages, particularly French — for example, that *and how* is a translation of *et comment*, that *you're telling me* is from *à qui le dites-vous*, and that *to get one's goat* is from *prendre sa chèvre*.<sup>23</sup> But not all Englishmen, of course, oppose and deride the American invasion, whether of slang or of novelties on high levels. Not a few agree with Horace Annesley Vachell that "American slanguage is not a tyranny, but a beneficent autocracy. . . . *Lounge-lizard*, for example, is excellent. . . . It is humiliating to reflect that English slang at its best has to curtsy to American slang." To which "Jackdaw" adds in *John O'London's Weekly*:<sup>24</sup> "We do but pick up the crumbs that fall from Jonathan's table."

During the World War there was some compensatory borrowing of English army slang and argot by the American troops, but it did not go very far. Indeed, the list of loan-words that came into anything approaching general use in the A.E.F. was about limited to *ace, blimp, cootie, Frog, Jack Johnson, Jerry, over the top* and *whizz-bang*. Some of the favorites of the British soldiers, e.g., *fag, blighty, cheerio, to strafe, funk-hole* and *righto*, were seldom if ever used by the Americans. The greater part of the American vocabulary came from the Regular Army, and some of it was of very respectable antiquity, e.g., *hand-shaker, Holy Joe* (for chaplain), *slum* (stew), *corned willie* (corned beef hash), *outfit, belly-robber, dog-robber* (an officer's servant or orderly),<sup>25</sup> *doughboy, jawbone*

<sup>21</sup> *London Evening News*, April 30, 1934.

<sup>22</sup> The same quest is sometimes pursued by Americans. See, for example, Shakespeare and American Slang, by Frederic S. Marquardt, *American Speech*, Dec., 1928, and Slang From Shakespeare, by Anderson M. Baten; Hammond, Ind., 1931.

<sup>23</sup> *Prendre sa chèvre* has been traced to Henri Estienne's *Satires*, c. 1585. It is to be found also in Montaigne and Molière, and was included in the 1776 edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*. Mr. Rowland M. Myers, to whom I am indebted here, suggests that Estienne may have picked it up in the course of his Greek studies. I have been told that the locution originated, in America, in the fact that the old-time horse-trainers, having a nervous horse to handle, put a goat in its stall to give it company. When the goat was taken away the horse yielded to the heebie-jeebies, and so was easily beaten on the track. A variant etymology was printed in the *London Morning Post*, Jan. 31, 1935. It was so precious that it deserves to be embalmed: "Among the Negroes in Harlem it is the custom for each household to keep a goat to act as general scavenger. Occasionally one man will steal another's goat, and the household debris then accumulates, to the general annoyance." The phrase "Let George do it," once so popular in the United States, is said by some to have been only a translation of "Laissez faire à Georges," which originated in France during the Fifteenth Century, and at the start had satirical reference to the multifarious activities of Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, Prime Minister to Louis XII.

<sup>24</sup> *The Way They Talk Over There*, Dec. 10, 1927.

<sup>25</sup> I am informed by Staff Sergeant J. R. Ulmer, U.S.A., that *dog-robber* is an enlisted man's term; the officers commonly use *striker*. In the same way, the enlisted men speak of *civvies*



(meaning credit, or anything spurious or dubious), *mud-splasher* (artilleryman), *buck-private*, *top-kick*, *goldfish* (canned salmon), *gob*, *leatherneck*, *padre*, *chow*, *outfit* and *punk* (bread). A few novelties came in, e.g., *tin-hat* and *a.w.o.l.*, and there was some fashioning of counter-words and phrases from French materials, e.g., *boocoo* or *boocoop* (beaucoup), *toot sweet* (tout de suite) and *trez beans* (très bien), but neither class was numerous. Naturally enough, a large part of the daily conversation of the troops was obscene, or, at all events, excessively vulgar. Their common name for cavalryman, for example, could hardly be printed here. The English called the military police *red-caps*, but the American name was *M.P.*'s. The British used *O.C.* for Officer Commanding; the Americans used *C.O.* for Commanding Officer. The British were fond of a number of Americanisms, e.g., *blotto*, *cold-feet*, *kibosh*, *nix*, *pal* and *to chew the rag*, but whether they were borrowed from the A.E.F. or acquired by some less direct route I do not know.<sup>26</sup> About *gob*, *leatherneck* and *doughboy* there have been bitter etymological wrangles. *Gob* has been traced variously to a Chinese word (*gob-shite*), of unknown meaning and probably mythical; to *gobble*, an allusion to the somewhat earnest methods of feeding prevailing among sailors; and to *gob*, an archaic English dialect word signifying expectoration. The English coastguardsmen, who are said to be free spitters, are often called *gobbies*. In May, 1928, Admiral H. A. Wiley, then commander-in-chief of the United States Fleet, forbade the use of *gob* in ship's newspapers, calling it "undignified and unworthy." But the gobs continue to cherish it. *Leatherneck*, I have been told, originated in the fact that the collar of the Marines used to be lined with leather. But the Navy prefers to believe that it has something to do with the fact that a sailor, when he washes, strips to the waist and renovates his whole upper works, whereas a Marine simply rolls up his sleeves and washes in the scantier manner of a civilian. It is the theory of all gobs that all Marines are dirty fellows. But

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and the officers of *cits* (civilian clothes). Sergeant Ulmer says that the Regular Army makes little use of a number of terms that are commonly believed to be in its vocabulary, e.g., *rookie*: it prefers *John* or *dumb John*.

<sup>26</sup> I am indebted here to Dr. H. K. Croessman and to Mr. Elrick B. Davis. See A.E.F. English, by Mary Paxton Keeley, *American Speech*, 1930, and Soldier Slang, by Capt. Elbridge Colby, U.S.A., eight articles, *Our Army*, Oct., 1929 — June, 1930. An anonymous article in the *Stars and Stripes*, the newspaper of the A.E.F., for April 12, 1918, is also worth consulting. For British war slang see Songs and Slang of the British Soldier, 1914-18, by John Brophy and Eric Partridge; London, 1930; Soldier and Sailor Words and Phrases, by Edward Fraser and John Gibbons; and War Words, in *Contemporary English*, by W. E. Collinson; Leipzig, 1927, p. 91 ff. The book by Brophy and Partridge also includes American terms, but there are many omissions, and a few gross errors. Its vocabulary is amplified in *Additions to a Volume on the Slang and the Idioms of the World War*, by Eugene S. McCartney, *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*, Vol. X, 1928. See also *Linguistic Processes as Illustrated by War Slang*, by the same, the same, Vol. III, 1923. (For the last two I am indebted to Dr. W. W. Bishop, librarian of the University of Michigan.) For French war slang see *The Slang of the Poilu*, by Eric Partridge, *Quarterly Review*, April, 1932; *L'Argot de la guerre*, by Albert Dauzet; Paris, 1918; *L'Argot des poilus*, by François Dechelette; Paris, 1918; *Le Langage des poilus*, by Claude Lambert; Bordeaux, 1915; *L'Argot des tranchées*, by Lazar Saineau; Paris, 1915; and *Le Poilu tel qu'il se parle*, by Gaston Esnault; Paris, 1919. For German, see *Wie der Feldgrau spricht*, by Karl Bergmann; Giessen, 1916, and *Deutsche Soldatensprache*, by O. Mausser; Strassburg, 1917.

the step from unwashed necks to leather seems to me to be somewhat long and perilous. The term *devil-dogs*, often applied to the Marines during the World War, was supposed to be a translation of the German *teufelhunde*. During the fighting around Chateau Thierry, in June and July, 1918, the Marines were heavily engaged, and the story went at the time that the Germans, finding them very formidable, called them *teufelhunde*. But I have been told by German officers who were in that fighting that no such word was known in the German army. *Doughboy* is an old English navy term for dumpling. It was formerly applied to the infantry only, and its use is said to have originated in the fact that the infantrymen once pipe-clayed parts of their uniforms, with the result that they became covered with a doughy mass when it rained.<sup>27</sup> . . .

<sup>27</sup> There have been several studies of the use of slang by the authors of fiction, British and American, but rather curiously all of them are by foreigners, *e.g.*, *Slang bei Sinclair Lewis*, Hanes-Werner Wasmuth; Hamburg, 1935; *Slang and Cant in Jerome K. Jerome's Works*, by Olaf E. Bosson; Cambridge (England), 1911; *Das Prinzip der Verwendung des Slang bei Dickens*, by Karl Westendorff; Greifswald, 1923. Dickens himself printed an article on slang in *Household Words*, Sept. 24, 1853.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the origin (time and place) of *to hornswoggle*, *toot sweet*, *leatherneck*, *chicken*, *to get one's goat*.
2. What is the chief difference between the slang of England and of America?
3. Which country borrowed more terms from the other — in 1800? in 1918? in 1936?
4. State two British objections to American slang. Can you think of answers to these objections?
5. Find examples of footnotes which are used for bibliographical information, for additional material about the subject, and for critical estimate of an authority.

Dixon Wecter

## The Age of the Great Depression

*Dixon Wecter was a professor of English who became interested in American history and wrote several outstanding books in that field. In particular, The Saga of American Society (1937), When Johnny Comes Marching Home (1944), and The Age of the Great Depression. In 1949, a year before his death, Wecter was appointed Margaret Byrne Professor of History in the University of California at Los Angeles. His work is said to represent "the newest school of historical writing which stresses synthesis and interpretation rather than the piling up of facts." Although some critics wanted more interpretation than Wecter gives in The Age of the Great Depression, most considered it "lively" and "a masterpiece of condensation."*

On no aspect of American life did the Depression have a more striking effect than the use of leisure. Net sales of amusement and sporting goods dropped from half a billion dollars in 1929 to little over a quarter of a billion in 1933. Federal taxes paid by recreational groups — city athletic clubs, country clubs, golf and tennis clubs — declined more than half between 1930 and 1934. Golf clubs alone lost about a million members, and under acute financial stress many private links were sold and converted to the daily-fee system of operation. Social clubs and fraternal organizations appeared to share the same eclipse.

On the other hand, simple home games — jigsaw puzzles, "monopoly," checkers, chess, dominoes, backgammon, pitching quoits and horseshoes — became immensely popular whether as time killers or diversions from anxiety. Roosevelt's best-known diversion, stamp collecting — not unrelated to the fecundity of his administration in issuing about a hundred new varieties during its first five years — publicized a pastime which recruited the number of philatelists from an estimated two million to nine. Bridge, for low stakes or none, gained under the fillip of novelty lent by the variant called contract. Ely Culbertson, author of best sellers on this pastime, estimated that despite the hard times the nation spent ten million dollars on bridge lessons alone in 1931 and, including purchase of playing cards, nearly a hundred million in all. In suburbia, staying at home promoted a renaissance of badminton, ping-pong and *al fresco* suppers and stimulated hobbies like amateur carpentry, mechanics, pigeon racing and others reported on a popular radio program called "Hobby Lobby."

The lunatic fringes of sport dear to the twenties, such as marathon dancing and flagpole sitting, persisted but with diminishing vitality. A brief vogue for being buried alive in 1934–1935 and a passing collegiate ardor for swallowing goldfish, begun by a Harvard freshman in 1939 and carried to strenuous heights

From Dixon Wecter, *The Age of the Great Depression 1929–1941*, Chapter XI. Copyright 1948 by The Macmillan Company and used with The Macmillan Company's permission.

by a Chicago student who devoured three phonograph records, seemed afterthoughts from a vanished day. Equally ephemeral was the passion for miniature golf which in the summer of 1930 mushroomed into a hundred-million-dollar business, but quickly ebbed, leaving the face of the nation pitted with greens made of dyed cottonseed. The mid-thirties witnessed fashions for slightly demented parlor games: a sign language called "handies" favored in 1935, a routine of outrageous puns in 1936 prefaced by the words "Knock, knock — who's there?" and a modified version of the charade called "The Game" emanating from Hollywood two years later.

Of collegiate sports football in particular displayed a new sobriety. In 1931, for the first time in years, the receipts of the "Big Ten" fell below two million dollars; soon it was remarked that "students in general seem less excited than formerly over the outcome of games." With easy money no longer lining the pockets of alumni, deliriously alcoholic week-ends declined no less visibly than did the "buying" of promising athletes, while the stadiums built in the twenties by huge bond issues now hardly met the interest on their indebtedness. Some excellent teams were turned out, though, and one of the most famous pigskin heroes, Byron ("Whizzer") White of the University of Colorado, combined his all-American rank with a Phi Beta Kappa key and election to a Rhodes Scholarship. With an audacity unthinkable to most, the University of Chicago in 1940 capped its heresies by abolishing intercollegiate contests. From the decade's middle years, however, professional football with a spirit frankly uncollegiate won favor in many cities as a spectator sport.

Professional baseball remained a hardy perennial, followed over the radio by millions, its stars like "Pepper" Martin, Lou Gehrig and Joe DiMaggio shining on every sports page in the land. In the year 1939, observed as the centenary of the National Game, the New York Yankees set an all-time record by winning their fourth straight World Series only to lose in the next year to the Cincinnati Reds. In 1940 and again in 1941 the Brooklyn Dodgers after twenty years' obscurity emerged as challengers for national recognition, and with their colorful style and cocky self-assertion excited popular imagination as no other team had ever done.

Heavyweight boxing, moribund since Gene Tunney's retirement in 1928, woke to new life with the advent of Joe Louis, a powerful Negro youth who came up from Alabama by way of the automobile factories of Detroit to garner an almost unbroken string of victories. His knockout of Max Baer in New York's Yankee Stadium in 1935 drew the first million-dollar gate since 1927. Bested by Max Schmeling in 1936, the "Brown Bomber" so mauled his adversary in the first round of a return engagement two years later that Nazi Germany's premier athlete had to be hospitalized. After flooring "Jim" Braddock in 1937 Louis possessed the world's championship in a grasp so firm that public interest and the gate receipts once more began to flag. Meanwhile juvenile talent in the

ring was fostered by the Golden Gloves tournament, which spread from national to international competition, and furnished the milieu for one of Clifford Odets's successful plays, "Golden Boy" (1937).

In two other sports the retirement from amateur competition of old masters let down the bars to a host of younger aspirants. After setting an all-time record in 1930 by winning the American and British amateur and open golf championships, Robert T. ("Bobby") Jones left the field to such contenders as Johnny Goodman, Olin Dutra, Lawson Little and Byron Nelson. In tennis William T. Tilden by turning professional in 1931 relinquished the spotlight to youths like Ellsworth Vines, Donald Budge and Frank Parker, while in the women's ranks Alice Marble succeeded to the crown of Helen Wills Moody. After long holding the Davis Cup, probably the most famous international trophy, the United States lost it to Australia in 1939, just as the curtain of war fell upon competitive tennis.

The Depression and New Deal not only deflated costly sports and athletic spectacles but also fostered mass participation. In seeking to redress past neglect the conscience of the thirties considered the needs of low-income groups, particularly the growing generation. With municipal budgets badly slashed, however, the authorities could hardly rise to the occasion. The supervision of many playgrounds would have broken down completely in 1932-1933 save for the volunteering of some citizens as recreation leaders aided by a skeleton staff of paid workers. From 1933 onward, however, the start of huge public-works programs gave the cause of mass recreation a propulsion never before known.

The initial emphasis fell upon parks and forest reserves, whose growth, according to a National Park Service official in 1935, was advanced a normal half-century by the first two years of CCC labor. Lakes were created, cabins built, trails carved to mountain peaks. In July, 1933, federal funds made possible the purchase of a vast area in the Great Smoky Mountains as one of the most attractive national parks. The next spring the Biological Survey, headed by an intransigent Republican but ardent conservationist, the cartoonist J. N. Darling ("Ding"), persuaded Congress to set up fish and game sanctuaries in the national forests.

Under such pace-setting and the availability of CCC labor to enhance state and community parks, local governments awoke to the opportunity. Virginia, West Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi, New Mexico, Nevada and Montana all acquired their first state parks during the initial two years of the New Deal. California created seven new ones in 1933 alone, and Texas set aside nearly a quarter of a million acres in the Big Bend of the Rio Grande River. In brief, more than six hundred thousand acres were added to state preserves between 1933 and 1936, while the annual federal purchase of forest land, mainly for parks and wild-life refuges, rose from a pre-Roosevelt average of about half a million acres to two million in 1935.

The public was not slow to accord approval. In 1934, the first year national parks kept travel statistics, six million visitors were reported; by 1938 the total surpassed sixteen million. Facilities like camp sites and picnic grounds and the spread of the youth-hostel movement fostered hiking as a pastime. By 1937 in New England alone seventy-six hostels at fifteen-mile intervals stretched along a thousand-mile chain of trails. The rise of the American Camping Association was another significant development, as was the formation of the Cub Scouts, an adjunct to the Boy Scouts designed to promote outdoor life and manliness among lads aged seven to ten.

For both youth and adults winter sports increased in favor. In 1930 a New England railroad scheduled the first snow train. Two years later the winter Olympics at Lake Placid kindled widespread interest, and this fact, coupled with the park facilities and ski runs and jumps built by the CCC on the public domain and with commercial ventures like the Union Pacific's well-advertised Sun Valley in Idaho, resulted in such trains carrying tens of thousands out of Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Salt Lake City, Portland, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Nor did urban recreation fail to benefit. Between 1930 and 1940 the number of cities reporting parks grew from nine hundred to almost fifteen hundred, their acreage from three hundred thousand to nearly half a million. During the last five years of the decade attendance at playgrounds doubled, at swimming centers almost doubled and at picnic centers increased tenfold. Here, too, the New Deal contributed funds and labor. The PWA spent over forty million dollars building athletic facilities under local supervision; and the NYA with a much smaller budget in 1937 reported that sixteen thousand of its employees were improving parks, while fifteen thousand served as leaders in crafts, dancing, drama, music and the like.

The greatest benefactor, the WPA, constructed tens of thousands of swimming pools and tennis courts, laid out or improved hundreds of municipal parks, golf courses and playing fields and, in collaboration with schools and extension services, supervised innumerable sports programs, employing more than forty thousand persons as of June, 1939, in the rôle of recreation leaders. About half this recreation program dealt with physical exercise, including softball, archery and shuffleboard. The rest lent great encouragement to the depression-sired revival of square dances, folk dances, singing games and amateur drama.

New Deal expenditures, involving at least one and a half billion dollars for permanent recreation facilities, were by no means solely responsible for increasing the nation's play life. Many municipalities took a vigorous stand. For example, when Fiorello LaGuardia early in 1934 became mayor of New York, he and his indefatigable park commissioner, Robert Moses, launched a program, supported by local and federal funds and the sinews of seventy thousand relief

workers, which started by destroying fashionable Central Park Casino and building on its site a children's playground. Moses drained the swamps of Flushing Meadow to make a World's Fair ground, and cleansed sewage-polluted waters and outfitted Jones Beach on Long Island for the accommodation of more than a hundred thousand people for swimming and sun bathing.

The greatest good of the greatest number was the new keynote of recreation. In most cities the formal landscape park, prized by the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sacrificed some of its scenic perfection to make way for pools, playgrounds, bridle paths and the like: the sign "Keep Off the Grass" grew rarer. Similar democratization filtered into organized games. The national lawn-tennis and golf associations began sponsoring public-parks championships, the winners playing in the national finals. In 1939 the tennis champion was Seymour Greenberg, a Jewish lad from Chicago, who thus obtained a place on the Junior Davis Cup squad, while the victor in golf was Andy Swedzko, a Pittsburgh steelworker.

Minor fashions came and went, such as the cycling revival of 1933-1935, which temporarily boosted the annual output of bicycles above the half-million mark for the first time since 1899 and, incidentally, helped introduce women's slacks. The firm grip of the automobile, however, was not to be dislodged. In 1935 no fewer than thirty-five million vacationers were still thronging the highways. The tourist camp, catering to purses from those of "Okies" up to wayfarers desiring promenade terraces and dancing pavilions, continued to flourish until the advent of gasoline restrictions late in 1941. A Kentucky commercial traveler named Duncan Hines sold hundreds of thousands of his guides to good restaurants and lodgings along the highway. Despite the appeal of new models with draft ventilators, sloping radiators, free wheeling, "airflow" design, hydraulic brakes and hydromatic gears, numberless Americans clung to old cars longer than ever before. In all, over thirty million cars and trucks were in use by the close of the era.<sup>1</sup>

For a time the innovation of the trailer looked portentous. In 1929 a bacteriologist named Arthur G. Sherman built a house on wheels to be towed behind his car, made several for his neighbors and exhibited one at the 1930 Detroit Automobile Show. Competitors quickly entered the field, and by 1936 fifty thousand a year were rolling off production lines, costing six or seven hundred dollars apiece and containing cooking as well as sleeping units. Many homemade ones also joined the highway procession. To the restless and uprooted, seeking adventure or a job and wary of taxes and rent, this self-sufficient vehicle held the lure of house boat or tramp steamer. By the summer of 1938, however, the novelty had worn thin, and sales slumped badly.

<sup>1</sup> The production in 1929 of over five and a half million cars and trucks fell to below one and a half million in 1932, then commenced a slow climb to regain predepression figures by 1937. *World Almanac for 1941*, 587, which reported the world total of automobiles at only forty-five million.

The eclipse of the trailer, with its cumbrous sway on curves and blocking of visibility, undoubtedly served the interests of safety. That consideration needed every aid in an era of increasing congestion and high speeds which exacted an annual toll of forty thousand deaths and a million and a quarter injuries, two thirds of them manifestly preventable. A gory description of highway mortality, "— And Sudden Death," written by J. C. Furnas for the *Reader's Digest* in 1935 and distributed also in four million reprints, had little visible effect, for nearly two thousand more fatalities occurred in 1936 than the year before. After the attainment of a record high in 1937 the accident rate fell somewhat for the rest of the era, thanks probably to stiffer penalties for lawbreakers, safe-driving pledges and local newspaper campaigns against "mixing alcohol and gasoline."

For many persons bus travel offered substantial savings over rail fares, if at some sacrifice in comfort. A popular movie, "It Happened One Night" (1934), presented such overland journeys in romantic guise. The number of passengers, including children in school busses, rose from fewer than one and three-quarter billion fares in 1933 to more than four and three-quarter billion in 1941.

Passenger bus and freight van had made considerable inroads upon railway traffic even before the Depression struck. With their overcapitalization the lines were caught short, and between 1929 and 1933 both passenger and freight revenues declined fifty per cent. In consequence almost a third of the nation's total mileage tottered into receivership or bankruptcy despite early and prolonged resuscitative efforts by the RFC. To stimulate patronage the Western companies shrewdly slashed passenger fares from 3.2 to 2 cents a mile, with a fifty-per-cent gain in business. When Eastern railroads seemed reluctant to follow suit, their hand was forced in June, 1936, by the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the whole national picture brightened. Meanwhile, public-works projects in many localities undertook to eliminate grade crossings for faster and also safer operation.

Seeking to make rail travel more alluring, the roads began to adopt air conditioning. "Manufactured weather" — promptly taken up by many shops and movie houses for the comfort of patrons and by industrialists for the efficiency of workers — developed into a seventeen-million-dollar annual industry by 1935. Air-conditioned Pullmans and coaches became standard equipment on all crack trains, vastly promoting seasonal travel in the South and arid Southwest and on some roads increasing summer traffic by as much as a fourth. Another improvement was the use of Diesel engines. In 1934 the Union Pacific pioneered a complete Diesel-powered train constructed of duralumin, and its competitor on the Chicago-Denver run, the Burlington, quickly followed with the first of its flashing stainless-steel "Zephyrs." These trains, running at speeds up to ninety miles per hour, brought the Rocky Mountains within overnight range of Chicago. Thereupon most of the big railroads went in heavily for "streamlining," pervasively influencing automobile design as well.



Aviation underwent a far greater transformation. At the start of this era the age of barnstorming, flying circuses and sight-seeing tours from local airports was only just past its prime; among the three and a half million Americans who flew in 1929 the great majority went up for the thrill. Six thousand planes were being manufactured a year, with sales totaling eighty-seven million dollars. Depression brought a temporary decrease, but by 1937 the business had rallied to reach an annual hundred and twenty-four million. The outbreak of the Second World War in Europe found the industry with a capacity of fifteen thousand planes a year, giving employment to fifty thousand workers. WPA and other expenditures on the construction of airports and landing strips then amounted to about a hundred and seventy-two million, which jumped another hundred million in 1941 alone.

In April, 1930, the Lindberghs set a dawn-to-dusk transcontinental record of fourteen and three quarters hours, and in 1931 Wiley Post and Harold Gatty rounded the globe in eight days and fifteen hours — records which by the close of the decade seemed primitive indeed, with flyers spanning the continent in seven hours and girdling the earth in less than four days. Not only the records but the heroes of yesteryear were gone, with Post, accompanied by the beloved humorist Will Rogers, a crash fatality of 1935 in Alaska, and Charles A. Lindbergh laboring under a cloud of isolationism and mystic racism.

These years saw other developments as well. A clash in 1934 between the Roosevelt administration and the nation's seventeen commercial air lines over mail contracts resulted in the army's disastrous attempt to fly the mail and then in the passage of an improved air-mail act in 1935. The next year the "China Clipper" made its initial flight to Manila and in 1939 passenger service was begun to Europe. Coast-to-coast travel in giant air cruisers at two hundred miles an hour, with overnight sleepers and navigation steadily improved by radio beacons, helped to make aviation no longer an adventure or amusement but the channel for a huge traffic, carrying by 1940 about three million passengers over a hundred and twenty million miles, along with fourteen million pounds of freight. Besides public carriers some sixteen thousand private planes were ranging the skies on the eve of the Second World War. Thanks in large part to the Civilian Pilot Training Program instituted in 1939 to teach college-age youths to fly, the number of certified civilian pilots, which stood at less than sixteen thousand in 1937, had by the end of 1941 attained a hundred thousand. The air-mindedness of young America, among students in manual-arts and engineering schools and amateur mechanics who a generation earlier would have tinkered with flivvers, forecast development of the world's largest aircraft plants and the servicing of the mightiest aerial fleet mobilized for that struggle.

Of the sedentary diversions of these years none surpassed that of listening to the radio. In 1929, when the cost still averaged over a hundred dollars, twelve million families owned receiving sets. The Depression not only brought lower

prices but also great audiences with time to kill: four million families purchased radios during the abysmal years 1930-1932. By the beginning of 1940 twenty-eight million homes, or eighty-six per cent of the population, owned a total of forty-four million sets, with saturation nowhere in sight. By this means an increasing proportion of the people absorbed a varied fare of news, politics, advertising, information and entertainment. The Office of Radio Research, set up in 1937 by Rockefeller funds to study the impact of broadcasting upon American life, hopefully suggested that radio aided more than it impaired the reading habits of listeners. It was doubtful, however, that the place of reading in the home remotely rivaled the four-and-a-half hours during which the average household radio was in daily use.

According to the radio act of 1927 and the communications act of 1934 the air waves belonged to the public domain for use "in the public convenience, interest, and necessity." Stations were simply lessees of part of that dominion, whose limits were thought to be staked out irrevocably by the eighty-nine wave lengths possible for broadcasting without interference. But the number of practicable frequencies suddenly bade fair to multiply after the disclosure in 1935 by Professor Edwin H. Armstrong of Columbia of frequency modulation (FM), by which static could be eliminated as well as greater tonal fidelity achieved. In 1940 the Federal Communications Commission, a regulatory body set up by Congress in 1934, authorized commercial operation of FM stations.

The public's thirst for news analysis and clarification lent a new popularity to commentators — Raymond Gram Swing, H. V. Kaltenborn, Lowell Thomas, Gabriel Heatter and others — to whose opinions about the Munich crisis, the Sino-Japanese conflict, the invasion of Poland and the fall of France millions intently listened. Moreover, between 1932 and 1939 the volume of news carried by radio almost doubled. In the summer of 1939 a *Fortune* poll asking, "Which of the two — radio or newspaper — gives you news freer from prejudice?" reported fifty per cent for radio, seventeen for the press and almost a third undecided or disposed to give them parity.

Yet, in face of the world crisis, radio's policy often mirrored the timidity of owners and advertisers. Alexander Woollcott, the "Town Crier," was taken off the air in 1935 by an uneasy sponsor after rude remarks about Hitler and Mussolini; Du Pont's excellent dramatizations of history, "The Cavalcade of America," officially eschewed all such issues as war and peace, the class struggle and religion; and a canvass by the FCC of all broadcasts during the first six months of 1941 revealed the curiously lackadaisical rôle played by local stations in educating the public against the day of military decision.

The New Deal's best radio propagandist was President Roosevelt himself, whose warm democratic salutation "My friends" had been adopted as early as his vain campaign for the vice-presidency in 1920. His direct, intimate appeal to the people built a personal leadership unprecedented in its influence; not

infrequently fifty thousand letters a day followed a "fireside chat." Recordings of these speeches through the years show changes in Roosevelt's technique, from the old-fashioned sonorous style with oratorical pauses learned in preradio days, to a lower pitch and softer, relaxed, more engaging address better suited to the unseen audience.

That the radio had become an immense political force was being demonstrated in another way by the Axis dictators as well as by home-grown demagogues like Father Coughlin and Huey Long. Not only did it carry nuances and subtle emotion denied to print, but it tended to arrest in the listener those critical impulses that often led a reader to turn back to the dubious or imperfectly understood. Startling evidence of its hypnotic effect on the mass imagination was afforded by a broadcast of the young actor Orson Welles on the evening of October 30, 1938, a month after the Munich crisis. Based upon H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds* and punctuated by announcements that should have carried reassurance, the sketch purported to describe a rocket-borne invasion of Martians, equipped with flame throwers and heat rays, who proceeded to ravage the New Jersey countryside until slain by the disease bacteria of this planet. Not pausing for that dénouement, at least a million auditors became upset or terror-stricken, many forsaking their homes afoot or by car in panic.

The potency of the air waves was not overlooked by the advertiser. While newspaper advertising never regained its 1929 peak of eight hundred million dollars, radio salesmanship mounted year by year until in 1941 it was doing a two-hundred-million-dollar business — over a third of that vouchsafed its competitor — with magazines occupying third place. Growing constantly more blatant, radio advertising featured the singing commercial, the middle commercial flanked by those incidental opening and closing plugs called by the trade "cowcatchers" and "hitchhikers," and the "give-away" to reward a listener's correct answer to a telephone call from the studio. The ratio of commercial to noncommercial or "sustaining" programs appeared steadily on the wane, advertisers' demands relegating some of the best public-service features to unpopular listening hours.

Helpless to throttle the radio as an advertising medium, the newspaper press for a time tried to prevent its access to a regular flow of the world's news. In 1934, however, the feud was composed by the so-called press-radio agreement and formation of the Transradio Press Service, which outlasted that pact. At the same time newspapers rapidly increased their ownership of stations, sometimes monopolizing all the news outlets in a given community. Within the single year 1935 the number of stations so owned doubled, and by 1940 no less than a third of the nation's eight hundred licensed stations were tied in one way or another to newspapers. Concentration also characterized the national networks, whose slickly professional programs, originating chiefly in New York and Hollywood, were piped to local stations all over the land. Three big chains commanded

the field: the National Broadcasting Company, whose Red and Blue networks in 1938 controlled a hundred and forty-eight stations by ownership or affiliation, the Columbia Broadcasting System with a hundred and fifteen, and Mutual (a newcomer dating from 1934) eighty-three.

Though educational programs were the exception rather than the rule, certain of them attained a nation-wide following, notably "The University of Chicago Round Table," "Invitation to Learning," "Science on the March" and "Art for Your Sake," which presented knowledge stripped of the husks of pedantry typical of old-fashioned lecture methods. In 1935 began the "Town Meeting of the Air," staging a brisk debate over current issues which sought to recapture the atmosphere of New England's historic institution. The perplexities of wealth and poverty, war and peace, stimulated the public forum not only on the ether but in other surroundings, including the "Town Hall" idea which spread in the thirties to cities in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Texas and elsewhere. By 1936 the United States commissioner of education stated that, out of three hundred and fifty public forums regularly attracting half a million persons, more than two thirds had been started since the onset of the Great Depression.

Fashions in entertainment came and went. After the success in 1936 of "Professor Quiz," question-and-answer programs like "Information Please" and "The Quiz Kids" burgeoned mightily. Such unrehearsed contests reflected a vogue similar to that featuring sidewalk interviews, guessing games and amateur hours, with a large element of audience participation. The radio serial proved to be a universal favorite, illustrated early in the era by the vast popularity of "Amos 'n' Andy," blackface comedians whose voices could be heard of a summer evening echoing block after block as one walked the streets of any suburb, or the plenitude of "soap operas" which later in the decade came to rule the daytime hours, dedicated to the praise of soap flakes and washing powders between interstices of tears and laughter in their plots of homely romance.<sup>2</sup> For juveniles the decade's hero was the "Lone Ranger," who made his début in 1933 — a stalwart without fear or vices, whose cry "Hi-Yo, Silver!" heralded his arrival upon that trusty steed to redress wrong and succor the weak. By the close of the era radio's best-known personality had come to be an impudent puppet named Charlie McCarthy, creation of the ventriloquist Edgar Bergen.

Music occupied over half of radio's daily log, and more of it than ever before was of high quality. In 1930 Columbia began its Sunday broadcasting of New York Philharmonic concerts; the following year the National Broadcasting Company launched its Saturday-afternoon series of grand operas from the

<sup>2</sup> According to a Manhattan columnist, "Toni Jo Henry, a 26-year-old murderess, . . . told this interviewer about the thoughts of a condemned person. 'I'm worried a little about 'Abie's Irish Rose,' a radio serial," she stated. "Every day I used to listen to it. But they discontinued the serial till September. I won't be here in September." The producers . . . are forwarding to Miss Henry a short synopsis of the story which will be broadcast in installments from September until June." "What Do We Know about Daytime Serial Listeners?" in P. F. Lazarsfeld and F. N. Stanton, eds., *Radio Research 1942-1943* (N.Y., 1944), 3-33.

Metropolitan; and in 1937 it persuaded the world-famous conductor, Arturo Toscanini, to undertake a memorable series with its own symphony orchestra. Over ten million families, according to a 1939 estimate, listened to such music; a poll in this year indicated that, save on the farm and at the bottom of the economic scale, those who enjoyed "classical" music outnumbered those desiring exclusively "popular." When in 1940 the Metropolitan Opera Company in severe financial straits appealed to its invisible audience, they contributed a third of a million dollars to "save the Met."

Music appreciation in the home saw the performer's rôle steadily supplanted, however, by the auditor's. While the radio was outstripping even the phonograph in popularity, father's fiddle gathered dust, and in affluent homes the piano remained oftentimes as a piece of prestige furniture. In 1939 only sixteen million copies of sheet music were sold as compared with forty-five million records of popular melodies. The invasion of music by radio, whether "live" or "canned," was greater still though harder to measure, while the life expectancy of a popular song, under furious exploitation by the "Lucky Strike Hit Parade" and similar programs, grew vastly shorter.<sup>3</sup>

Both radio and phonograph fostered the continued popularity of dancing, which had swept the twenties under the heady inspiration of jazz, that powerful if almost indefinable rhythmic style. About 1931, when a popular song was urging the depressed to "wrap your troubles in dreams, and dream your troubles away," the plangent bravado of jazz temporarily faded from fashion before the soothing hypnotic strains of "sweet" bands like those of Guy Lombardo, Wayne King and Eddy Duchin. An advance-guardist of new modes in jazz who died in that year — the trumpeter Leon ("Bix") Beiderbecke — would later be recalled nostalgically by Dorothy Baker's fine novel of the artist as jazzman, *Young Man with a Horn* (1938).

Early in 1934, perhaps as a harbinger of recovery, the spirit of jazz was reborn, largely by the superb clarinet recordings and dance-band broadcasts of Benny Goodman, exponent of what European connoisseurs called *le jazz hot*. It soon gained a new name, swing. A more dynamic form of syncopation and superimposed rhythm, an intense yet easy floating that "gets there on time" — and in expert hands capable of rich improvisation — swing retained the essence of its parent, jazz. "Swing is to jazz what the poetic spirit is to poetry," wrote one lyric journalist in the winter of 1935–1936 when "jam sessions" and Hot Clubs were springing up over the nation. An incidental term in high favor was "boogie-woogie," signifying piano music in which an insistent rolling left-hand pattern mingled with the fancy-free inventions of the right.

<sup>3</sup> Music publishers computed the lifetime of a preradio favorite at nearly two years as against four months or less under the constant titillation and quick satiety wrought by radio. Novelties like "The Music Goes Round and Round" (1935) and "Flat-Foot Floogie" (1938) wore out in from six to eight weeks, but ballads like "The Last Round-Up" (1933) enjoyed better than average durability.

Millions of youthful feet indorsed the new style. Fervent connoisseurs called themselves hep-cats, and the actively devout jitterbugs. When they "got in the groove" and "went to town," the results were apt to be more kinetic than graceful. Late in 1937 a dance called the Big Apple conquered the country, bearing some likeness to the old square dance in which a "caller" at the center of the floor summoned one couple after another to "rise and shine." Among the more popular turns were the Suzy-Q, truckin' or shagging, while in 1938 the Lambeth Walk, cockney importation for group dancing, vied in favor with a local routine called the Lindy Hop. The dancing mania of youth, with its accompanying argot and the "drape-shape" or "zoot-suit" clothes affected by certain zealots near the end of this era, puzzled elders often to the point of alarm. In the main, however, the cult of swing was more athletic than erotic, and the sartorial extremes sometimes associated with it were the compensatory mechanisms (to borrow another sort of jargon) devised by certain submerged juvenile groups, notably Negro and Mexican, in the big cities. The jitterbug age was youth's last fling before the bugles sounded war. . . .

#### LEISURE AND RECREATION

GENERAL: F. R. Dulles, *America Learns to Play* (N.Y., 1940), has two chapters pertinent here, while J. R. Tunis, *Democracy in Sport* (N.Y., 1941), considers the social philosophy of games. J. F. Steiner, *Americans at Play* (*Recent Social Trends Monograph*, N.Y., 1933), gives mainly the pre-Depression picture; his *Research Memorandum on Recreation in the Depression* (Social Sci. Research Coun., *Bull.*, no. 32, 1937) extends the narrative. *Recreation* (N.Y., 1907- ), the National Recreation Association monthly, devotes one issue annually (normally June) to a "Year Book" reviewing community recreation; the Association's *Park Recreation Areas in the United States: 1940* offers a survey of municipal and county park systems; under the same sponsorship appeared G. D. Butler, *Introduction to Community Recreation* (N.Y., 1940), containing a chapter on the Depression. A spate of books on the uses of leisure flooded the early years of this decade; Gove Hambidge, *Time to Live* (N.Y., 1933), is typical. Touring, pleasure travel and related matters are considered by M. A. Willey and S. A. Rice, *Communication Agencies and Social Life* (*Recent Social Trends Monograph*, N.Y., 1933). G. A. Lundberg, Mirra Komarovsky and Mary A. McInerney, *Leisure: a Suburban Study* (N.Y., 1934), traces behavior patterns in New York's Westchester county.

READING: The most accessible pastime is viewed by Douglas Waples, *Research Memorandum on Reading Habits in the Depression* (Social Sci. Research Coun., *Bull.*, no. 37, 1937), bringing up to date a survey of group interests by Waples and R. W. Tyler, *What People Want to Read About* (Chicago, 1931). Annual lists in Alice P. Hackett, *Fifty Years of Best Sellers, 1895-1945* (N.Y., 1945), and files of *Publishers' Weekly* (N.Y., 1872- ) are valuable. O. H. Cheney, *Economic Survey of the Book Industry, 1930-1931* (N.Y., 1931), and Jacob Loft, *The Printing Trades* (N.Y., 1944), cover terminal points in the era for that industry. R. L. Duffus, *Our Starving Libraries* (Boston, 1933), records the impact of hard times.

RADIO: P. F. Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page* (N.Y., 1940), reflects the sociologist's view; Lazarsfeld and F. N. Stanton, eds., *Radio Research* (N.Y., 1941- ),

contains much social and cultural history, as do Hadley Cantril and G. W. Allport, *The Psychology of Radio* (N.Y., 1935), and H. S. Hettinger, ed., *New Horizons in Radio* (Am. Acad. of Polit. and Social Sci., *Annals*, CCXIII, 1941). See also annuals of the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education, *Radio in Education* (Chicago, 1931-1935). The pressure of commercialism rising in the thirties is surveyed in Llewellyn White, *The American Radio* (Commission on Freedom of the Press, *Publs.*, V, Chicago, 1947), and in Federal Communications Commission, *Public Service Responsibility of Broadcast Licensees* (Wash., 1946).

MOVIES: An ambitious "Film Index" was compiled under auspices of the Federal Writers' Project, canvassing some 25,000 books and articles relating to motion pictures; only one volume of a proposed three has been published: Harold Leonard, ed., *The Film as Art. a Bibliography* (N.Y., 1941). Among better studies of the movies are Lewis Jacobs, *The Rise of the American Film* (N.Y., 1939); L. C. Rosten, *Hollywood: the Movie Colony, the Movie Makers* (N.Y., 1941); and Ruth A. Inglis, *Freedom of the Movies* (Commission on Freedom of the Press, *Publs.*, IV, Chicago, 1947). For their social influence, see Edgar Dale, *The Content of Motion Pictures* (N.Y., 1935), and Margaret F. Thorp, *America at the Movies* (N.Y., 1940); for censorship, Raymond Moley, *The Hays Office* (Indianapolis, 1945).

POPULAR MUSIC: Dance bands find their celebrants in Benny Goodman and Irving Kolodin, *The Kingdom of Swing* (N.Y., 1939). The Decca Album Series, "Songs of Our Times," contains recordings of the song hits through this period, some fifteen to twenty-five for each year; four albums covering the years 1928-1931 have now appeared.

THE THEATER: Laudatory accounts of the Federal Theater are Willson Whitman, *Bread and Circuses* (N.Y., 1937), and Hallie Flanagan, *Arena* (N.Y., 1940). A more critical study, sponsored in 1942 by the American Council of Learned Societies, was directed by Dr. W. F. MacDonald of the Ohio State University; read in manuscript by the writer through the kindness of Dr. D. H. Daugherty, it will soon be accessible in print.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What effect did the Depression have on bridge? ping-pong? collegiate football? professional football? stamp collecting? skiing? golf? Explain.
2. Compare the outstanding radio and television programs of the present decade with the radio programs Wecter lists for the 1930's.
3. Explain what is meant by "the lunatic fringes of sport." Are there such "fringes" today? Give examples.
4. What permanent contributions did the Depression make to American recreation? Which do you consider most valuable?
5. Supposing that you had written this article as your research theme, indicate the points at which footnotes would be needed; for instance, to give sources for statistics and direct quotations.

*"Laughing is approximately twice as difficult as it was a generation or two ago," admits Frank Sullivan. Nevertheless, this leading humorist with his "slightly squint-eyed view of modern life" continues to contribute to The New Yorker and other magazines what one reviewer calls "very funny stuff." Frank Sullivan is a native and resident of Saratoga Springs, New York, a graduate of Cornell University. He conducted a column in the old New York World in the 1920's. Today he is known as a national expert on the "cliche," and for such collections of his essays as Broccoli and Old Lace (1931), Sullivan at Bay (1939), and A Rock in Every Snowball (1946).*

I have just finished reading a book <sup>1</sup> which struck me as being one of the finest books I have read since I read "The Flowering of New England," by the same author.<sup>2</sup> But there is a fly in the ointment. I have been rendered cockeyed by the footnotes. There seem to be too many of them, even for a book largely about Boston.<sup>3</sup> I do not know why the author had to have so many footnotes. Maybe he had a reason for each one, but I suspect the footnote habit has crept up on him, for I got out his book on Emerson,<sup>4</sup> published in 1932, and he used practically no footnotes in it.

You read along in "New England: Indian Summer," interested to the hilt in what Van Wyck Brooks is telling you about Longfellow,<sup>5</sup> Thoreau,<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "New England: Indian Summer."

<sup>2</sup> Van Wyck Brooks, author of "New England: Indian Summer," "The Flowering of New England," "The Life of Emerson," "The Ordeal of Mark Twain," and other books.

<sup>3</sup> Sometimes referred to as The Hub. Capital and chief city of Massachusetts. Scene of the Boston Tea Party and the arrest of Henry L. Mencken. Bostonians are traditionally noted for their civic pride, or, as an envious New York critic once termed it, their parochial outlook. It is related that on an occasion when Saltonstall Boylston learned that his friend L. Cabot Lowell was leaving for a trip around the world, he inquired of Lowell, "Which route shall you take, L.C.?" "Oh, I shall go by way of Dedham, of course," replied Mr. Lowell. On another occasion, the old Back Bay aristocrat Ralph Waldo Mulcahy said to Oliver Wendell Rooney, "By the way, Rooney, did your ancestors come over on the Mayflower?" "Oh, no," replied Mr. Rooney. "They arrived on the next boat. They sent the servants over on the Mayflower."

<sup>4</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sage of Concord and famous transcendentalist philosopher, not to be confused with Ralph McAllister Ingersoll, editor of *PM*.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Good Gray Poet. Longfellow was no footnote addict. He preferred footprints. Cf. his "Psalm of Life":

And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time.

<sup>6</sup> Henry David Thoreau, philosopher who lived at Walden Pond for two years on carrots, twigs, nuts, minnows, creek water, and, as Margaret Fuller suspected (booming it out at Brook Farm in that full, rich voice of hers, to the dismay of William Ellery Channing, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edward Everett Hale, John Lothrop Motley, Charles Eliot Norton, and William Lloyd Garrison), sirloin steaks and creamery butter smuggled to him by Emerson. Suffering as he did from a vitamin deficiency, the result of too much moss in his diet, Thoreau became somewhat of a misanthrope and would often creep up behind members of the Saturday Club and shout "Boo!", or, as some authorities maintain, "Pooh." The matter is not clarified very much, one must admit, by a letter Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote to her son, Harriet



Phillips,<sup>7</sup> James,<sup>8</sup> Alcott,<sup>9</sup> Lowell,<sup>10</sup> Adams,<sup>11</sup> and other great figures of the Periclean Age of The Hub,<sup>12</sup> when suddenly there is a footnote.

The text is in fine, clear type. The footnotes are in small type. So it is quite a chore to keep focussing up and down the page, especially if you have old eyes or a touch of astigmatism.<sup>13</sup> By and by you say to yourself, "I be damn if I look down at any more footnotes!," but you do, because the book is so interesting you don't want to miss even the footnotes.<sup>14</sup>

When you get to the footnote at the bottom of the page, like as not all you find is *ibid*. *Ibid* is a great favorite of footnote-mad authors.<sup>15</sup> It was a great favorite with Gibbon.<sup>16</sup> How come writers of fiction do not need footnotes?

Beecher Stowe, Jr. (not to be confused with Herbert Bayard Swope), on June 7, 1854, in which she states: "Not much to write home about, as the saying goes. Dave Thoreau here for supper last nite [*sic*]. He got into an argument with John Greenleaf Whittier, the Good Gray Poet, as to whether snow is really ermine too dear for an earl, and Greenleaf called him a Communist. Dave then crept up behind Greenleaf and shouted either 'Boo!' [*sic*] or 'Pooh!' [*sic*], I couldn't make out wich [*sic*]. All well here except F. Marion Crawford, Sarah Orne Jewett, Charles Dudley Warner, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and William Dean Howells, who complain of feeling sic [*sic*]. Your aff. mother, H. B. Stowe, Sr."

<sup>7</sup> Wendell Phillips. He was about the only Bostonian of his time who wore no middle name and he was therefore considered half naked. Even Mark Twain, when he went to visit Howells in Boston, registered as Samuel Langhorne Clemens.

<sup>8</sup> Probably not Jesse James. Probably is either William James, deviser of Pragmatic Sanctions, or his brother Henry, the novelist. It was about this time that Henry James was going through his transition period, and could not make up his mind whether he was in England living in America or in America living in England.

<sup>9</sup> Amos Bronson Alcott, educator and bad provider. The Mr. Micawber of his day. Not to be confused with Novelist Bus Bronson of Yale or Mrs. Chauncey Olcott.

<sup>10</sup> James Russell Lowell, poet, essayist, and kinfolk of late rotund, cigar-smoking Back Bay Poetess Amy Lowell, no rhymester she.

<sup>11</sup> Henry Adams, author of "The Education of Henry Adams," by Henry Adams. Not to be confused with Henry Adams, Samuel Adams, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Abigail Adams, Charles Edward Adams (not to be confused with Charles Francis Adams, Charles Henry Adams, or Henry Adams), Maude Adams, Franklin Pierce Adams, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Bristow Adams, George Matthew Adams, James Truslow Adams, Adams Express, Adams & Flanagan, Horace Flanagan, or Louis Adamic.

<sup>12</sup> Sometimes referred to as Boston. One is reminded of the famous quatrain:

Here's to the City of Boston,  
The home of Filene and the Card.,  
Where the Rileys speak only to Cabots  
And the Cabots speak only to God!

<sup>13</sup> In this connection, it is interesting to note that Louisa May Alcott had a touch of astigmatism, if we are to accept the word of Charles Eliot Norton. Edward Everett Hale states in his Letters, Vol. XV, Ch. 8, pp. 297 *et seq.*, that William Cullen Bryant told Oliver Wendell Holmes that on one occasion when the fun was running high at Thomas Wentworth Higginson's home and all barriers were down, Thomas Bailey Aldrich had put the question bluntly to Charles Eliot Norton, saying, "Now listen, has Louisa May Alcott got astigmatism or hasn't she?" Charles Eliot Norton answered, perhaps unwisely, "Yes." Cf. the famous dictum of General William Tecumseh Sherman, sometimes erroneously ascribed to General Ulysses Simpson Grant: "Never bring up a lady's name in the mess."

<sup>14</sup> Ah there, Van Wyck!

<sup>15</sup> So is cf.

<sup>16</sup> Edward Gibbon, English historian, not to be confused with Cedric Gibbons, Hollywood art director. Edward Gibbon was a great hand for footnotes, especially if they gave him a chance to show off his Latin. He would come sniffing up to a nice, spicy morsel of scandal about the Romans and then, just as the reader expected him to dish the dirt, he'd go into his Latin routine, somewhat as follows: "In those days vice reached depths not plumbed since the reign of Caligula and it was an open secret that the notorious Empress Theodora *in tres partes divisa erat* and that she was also addicted to the *argumentum ad hominem!*" Gibbon, prissy little fat man that he was, did that just to tease readers who had flunked Caesar.

Take Edna Ferber.<sup>17</sup> She doesn't use footnotes. Suppose Edna Herford<sup>18</sup> took to writing her novels in this manner: "Cicely Ticklepaw \* sat at her dressing table in a brown study. She had 'a very strange feeling she'd ne'er felt before, a kind of a grind of depression.' † Could it be love? ‡ If so, why had she sent him § away? She sighed, and a soft cry of 'Aye me!' || escaped her. Seizing a nail file desperately, she commenced hacking away at her fingernails, when a voice behind her said, 'O! that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!'" Cicely reddened, turned. It was Cleon Bel Murphy! Softly, she told him, "What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night, so stumblest on my counsel?" " &

What would Van Wyck Brooks say if Edna Ferber wrote like that?<sup>19</sup> Yes. Exactly. Now, where were we?<sup>20</sup> No, I was not. I know what I was saying. You keep out of this. You're a footnote!<sup>21</sup> Yeah? Well, just for that, no more footnotes. Out you go!<sup>22</sup> I am, that's who.<sup>23</sup> See what I mean, Van Wyck? Give a footnote an inch and it'll take a foot.<sup>24</sup> I give up. They got me. And they'll get you too in the end, Van Wyck. You may think you're strong enough to keep 'em under control; you may think you can take a footnote or leave it. All I say is, remember Dr. Jekyll! Lay off 'em, Van. I'm telling you for your own good.

— UNEASY BROOKS FAN<sup>25</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Edna Cabot Ferber, contemporary New England novelist. It is related of Edna Ferber that she once met Oliver Herford in Gramercy Park and recoiled at the sight of an extremely loud necktie he was wearing. "Heavens above, Oliver Herford!" exclaimed Miss Ferber, never one not to speak her mind. "That is a terrible cravat. Why do you wear it?" "Because it is my wife's whim that I wear it," explained Oliver Herford. "Well, land sakes alive, before I'd wear a tie like that just on account of a wife's whim!" jeered Miss Ferber. "You don't know my wife," said Oliver Herford. "She's got a whim of iron." Miss Ferber later made this incident the basis for the dramatic battle between the husband and wife in her novel "The Cravat."

<sup>18</sup> No, no, no, not Edna Herford! Edna *Ferber*: Edna Herford is the fellow who had the wife with the iron whim.

\* Blonde, lovely, and twenty-one.

† See "I'm Falling in Love with Someone" — Victor Herbert.

‡ Sure.

§ Cleon Bel Murphy, the man she loves.

|| "Romeo and Juliet," Act II, Scene 2.

\$ *Ibid.*

& *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> And what would Edna Ferber say if Edna Ferber wrote like that?

<sup>20</sup> You were saying Louisa May Alcott had astigmatism.

<sup>21</sup> Yeah? And how far would you have got in this article without footnotes?

<sup>22</sup> Who's gonna put me out?

<sup>23</sup> Yeah? You and who else?

<sup>24</sup> Yoo-hoo! Footnote!

<sup>25</sup> Frank Saltonstall Sullivan.

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION VI

1. State, in a brief sentence, the thesis of each selection. Which thesis do you consider more important? more interesting?
2. Find a passage in each selection in which the author is striving for human interest. How does he gain it — anecdote? humorous phrasing? dialogue? etc.
3. Compare the discussion of sources in Mencken's footnotes and Wecter's bibliography. Which author seems more critical of his authorities? Why?

4. Did Wecter and Mencken make you feel that their statements and statistics were accurate? If they did, what devices won your confidence?
5. List some different uses for footnotes. Which types does Mencken use? What kinds does Sullivan parody?

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Make a collection of campus colloquialisms by circulating among your friends with a notebook. Check these expressions against a standard dictionary of slang and then write a brief, humorous sketch of campus slang. Include information drawn from the dictionary and from other authorities; document with footnotes.
2. Make a study of sports and/or recreation on campus. Get accurate figures from your athletic department, administrators of intra-mural programs, social chairman, etc. Give your study a thesis, e.g., more emphasis on intra-mural sports, limitation of activities.
3. Take one of the topics treated by Wecter, e.g., development of the winter resort, air travel, and develop it in greater detail. Begin by consulting the sources in Wecter's bibliography.
4. Write a research paper on American recreation between 1946 and 1952. Parallel Wecter by connecting your study of recreation with postwar social conditions (e.g., married veterans and trailer life on campus, the restlessness of youth and hot rods, the canasta rage, etc.)

## SECTION

# VII

## DESCRIPTION

Have you ever written a friend about how your room at college is fixed up, or what your favorite fishing hole or mountain camp looks like? If so, you have been writing description.

In a way, all memorable literature is “description”; an attempt to make the reader see and feel what the writer has seen and felt. But in a more restricted sense, description refers to writing about particular places or things: a speckled trout beneath the river bank, the Dust Bowl, skyscrapers and Times Square. As such, it is an important ingredient in fiction; and sometimes, in magazine pieces like the *Saturday Evening Post*’s “Cities of America” series, it appears as a separate kind of article, different from both the explanatory and opinion types.

More than either explanation or argument, description requires imagination. When you describe, you are not merely presenting facts or opinions; you are creating a picture on paper. Between you and your reader there is a strange magic; he doesn’t just weigh the evidence you introduce — he is *transported* to that very spot, that South Sea island or raw new housing development, that you are depicting. He sniffs the warm, salt air or is depressed by the monotony of identical tiny brick houses, set each on its parcel of clay. To see how this is accomplished, look first at the selection from Steinbeck.

To begin with, Steinbeck chooses to *describe something that has significance*: the Oklahoma countryside under the impact of the devouring drought which turned it into a “dust bowl” and uprooted thousands of human beings. Pure description, description of a table simply as a table, won’t keep anyone awake if it is read in class. But a vivid word picture of something that has human interest or associations — a garden, a football stadium, a forest fire — should. Or, make that table the battered desk at which you have studied for exams and composed love letters, and you may do something with it.

Then, in the actual technique of describing, *specific detail* presented by means of *well-chosen adjectives* and *illuminating figures of speech* is most important.

Steinbeck's chapter is full of observations that immediately ring true, even to one whose experience of dust storms is limited: like the "little lines of dust . . . at the door sills," where the dust has penetrated the house, or the film of dust on the water in the horses' troughs, which they must nuzzle away before drinking. Steinbeck makes one brilliant metaphor take the place of several words when he calls the sharp corn leaves "bayonets," and he shows you the exact shade of the sun by a very commonplace simile: it is "as red as ripe new blood."

In a more elaborate and striking figure of speech, he tells how the corn stalks, uprooted from the crusted soil, "settled wearily sideways toward the earth and pointed the direction of the wind," like weathervanes. As for well-chosen adjectives, you can almost see the expression of the farmers change when Steinbeck says, at the end, that their faces "lost their bemused perplexity and became hard and angry and resistant."

In addition to choosing a subject that has significance, and describing it with vivid detail, Steinbeck has an *interesting organization*. No kind of writing can become monotonous sooner than description (ever skip a descriptive passage in a novel, to get on with the story?). To guard against this, Steinbeck makes his description chronological — the changes brought by the increasing drought — which gives the reader a sense of working up to a climax. He also puts in, here and there, the reactions of human beings to these changes: the men eagerly sniffing as the rain clouds pass overhead but do not descend; the men and women going about through the wind with handkerchiefs tied over their noses, goggles over their eyes — or lying awake in their beds at night, hearing the wind die down, and coming out in the morning to stare at the blasted fields. If you describe the college bookstore, you might do the last five minutes of a period, ending with the excitement and exclamations and mad rush in and out the swinging doors as the bell rings. Or you might describe your room at home by showing it change from that of a high school freshman to that of a college freshman.

A couple of final cautions: Don't forget to *appeal to all the senses* — notice how Steinbeck includes the "raw sting" of dust in people's nostrils, and the sound of the wind as it "softly clashed the drying corn." And remember that *description of something in motion is more effective than description of something static*. If you count the words that express motion in Steinbeck's selection, you will probably be surprised at the total. We see the rain clouds hurrying northward, the dust fluffing up and falling on the fields or rising in pillars beside a man walking, the corn stalks settling, etc. This is still a picture, but the colors and sizes and shapes of the different objects are given in connection with *action*. If you can manage to introduce action in your description, you can avoid the boredom of "The Administration Building is red brick, about one hundred and fifty feet square. It has four stories. The bronze doors at the entrance were presented by the Class of 1896 . . ." etc.

Other selections in this section will give you still more hints for your descriptive writing. Langewiesche's "American Air" shows what an *unusual point of view* can do for the writer. We all know what at least parts of the United States look like from an automobile window; Langewiesche puts wings on your jalopy and gives you a different perspective. New England, to the airman, consists of grim forests and "nasty little pastures, with the naked rock poking up right through the middle." The Alleghenies, rising to meet a "low, gray, ragged ceiling" of clouds, are a real barrier, pierced here and there by a valley "like a tunnel." The change from East to West is dramatic; from forest and mountain and cloud to the "graph paper" country of the Middle West, the open farms laid out by rectangular section lines; and then to the swell of the prairies, "the vast khaki plains," on which a train, far away, is "a small black thing under a smoke plume, like a ship at sea."

"The air view is an honest view," Langewiesche writes, and then proceeds to *interpret* what he has described, making the scenes give evidence about the character of the American people and their democracy. Here is a simple formula for an interesting descriptive piece: an original, different point of view plus the new thoughts which that point of view suggests. For example, he says: "New York City. What's it all about? On the ground, why you know . . . words, ideas, paper of all sorts. But, from the air, I regret to state, New York looks like a place where steamships tie up to piers. . . . Manhattan, with all those tentacles sticking out into the water, looks like some biological exhibit — some organ specially developed to draw nourishment from the sea." If you'd like to parallel Langewiesche's piece, you might look at your campus or home town from some high, distant spot and then try to interpret the *ideas* you get from the layout, the relative size of the buildings, the things that are there and the things that aren't: what seems most significant to you, from a distance. Langewiesche combines excellent description with interesting ideas and, at times, a rather factual approach.

Sally Carrighar has an even more original point of view, and a more imaginative style of writing, in "The Cutthroat Trout." In this description, we look *up* from the bottom of the pond (a fish's-eye view) at the "tremulous green shine," the "opaque silver cover" of the surface water. With the motionless trout, we *feel* (remember — appeal to other senses?) the touch of the water "along his skin, from nose to tail, as though he ceaselessly swam forward." We watch the "shadows of the waves . . . racing over the bottom silt," as the wind springs up . . . and, of course, as readers we enjoy the non-descriptive element of an exciting plot: the trout's enemies closing in on him, osprey, otter, and, most perilous of all, the mysterious sinking of the Pond that nearly traps our hero.

"The Cutthroat Trout" is outstanding for vivid adjectives, strong verbs, lively description of action. Almost any passage in it will repay hard study —

like the one about the strange animal that waded in the Pond and then, on the bank, "shuddered the moisture from its fur"; or the accounts of the trout's leaps into the "dangerous dazzling air"; or the osprey's dive: "Upon the surface crashed a huge light-feathered breast. Claws reached and speared a bullhead. A brown throat, then a beak and eyes came through the top of the pond . . . A shower of bubbles scattered downward as the long wings lowered . . ." This is excellent detail, beautifully presented. Although "The Cutthroat Trout" is a short story, much of its interest lies in the description; the plot is really only the frame for the picture of Nature.

Not so unusual as a pool seen from its bottom, or a continent seen from the sky, is the subject which has fascinated many writers, that complex creation of man, the city. The last selection in this section, Dos Passos' "The Two Ends of Pennsylvania Avenue," deals with two of the most famous parts, and powers, of Washington: the Capitol and the White House.

"The Two Ends of Pennsylvania Avenue" is intricate, to match its intricate subject. It is like a painting consisting of a series of panels. In those panels you see not only the Capitol dome, "like an inflating balloon rearing its august architraves among circling pigeons behind the trees," and the White House, "light pouring in through tall windows off green lawns shaded by big trees . . . always . . . quiet and serene there as if nothing outside mattered." You see people, in various attitudes: a congresswoman, "a slender cool looking lady, with a finely cut profile and her hair in a pompadour," making an intelligent speech; an elevator operator in the Senate Office Building, "a man in a wellpressed light gray suit, who had a carnation in his buttonhole"; President Roosevelt, at a press conference, "blowing out his cheeks the way he does when searching for a word, lifting his eyebrows to make the questioner feel he has all his attention, man to man, for a moment; cosily scratching an ear or the back of his head . . ." By just a few words, Dos Passos suggests the essential character of a place or a person.

This is the art of the novelist or dramatist. Through his description, through these impressions, Dos Passos is indirectly suggesting some things about our government. Where Langewiesche explicitly states that the American landscape reveals that Americans are of such and such a character, Dos Passos shows you a cab driver wanting the Germans exterminated; a high official close to the President refusing to discuss whether or not the President has lost touch with the average man; a freshman Representative idealistically hoping that he and other newcomers can seize control of the all-important Congressional committees in order to accomplish . . . he doesn't know exactly what. To hold your interest, Dos Passos frequently injects a little conflict into his sketches — the argument with the cab driver, the opposition to the congresswoman, the fencing with the White House officials about the President's contacts with the country. In brief, he presents people against backgrounds, and lets you draw your own conclusions: skillful reporting technique.

From Dos Passos, then, you can learn how to pick out, not so many details as Carrighar or Steinbeck give, but the essential ones ("the great soapcolored Roman vaults of the Union Station," "the grimed windows," "the floor, the benches, the entrances . . . dark with shifting masses of people"). You can learn how to carry description of people over into actual characterization. You can learn how to organize a series of scenes into an impressive whole — perhaps by trying this technique with a description of your own city or home town. And this will be description on the postgraduate level.

Nothing will make you more popular with the editor, or the readers, of a campus newspaper than the ability to capture, in a descriptive sketch, the lifelike impression of a familiar college scene. Try it; and even if you do not completely succeed, you will enjoy that spot, that activity, more than ever because you have really looked at it, really participated in it, with every one of your senses and, most important of all, with your imagination.



*Wolfgang Langewiesche, research pilot and “perhaps the ablest expositor . . . of the technical aspects of flying,” came to this country from Germany in 1929. He was a student of sociology at the University of Chicago in the early 1930’s until, one day when he could no longer resist the urge to fly, he shut his books and headed for the airport. He soon began writing articles, technical and popular, on aviation. I’ll Take the High Road (1939) is his account of his early flying experiences. Stick and Rudder (1944) is a manual of the art of flight. “In some of his observations of the lands over which he flew,” says a critic of A Flier’s World, “his touch is that of a poet.”*

I used to think of the United States as one thinks of a golf course. It was simply terrain on which to practice your technique. The technique was “Cross-Country Flight”; XC for short, when you wrote it up afterward in your log book. Flight was *much* newer then, in the early thirties. Merely to circle the airport still filled you, every last cubic inch of you, with a sensation that was like nothing else. And to quit circling, to head out straight cross-country — that was Flight, raised to the Second Power. Boy!

I used to look down, in those ancient days, and watch my fat little rubber tire hang idle over the depth. It went across somebody’s roof: no jolt. Treetops; a highway; then a river. You flew out from over land to over water: no sink. No coolness. Imagine that: walking on land and water like a god. What a machine! And what a pilot! (Me.) Bring on your skyscrapers, so I can top them. Bring on your hills, so I can cross them. Bring on your distances, and I shall eat them up. Bring on your country, and I shall ignore it.

Well, you find out.

I remember my first flight over New England. Ignore it? I wished I could. Instead, I thought: “What horrible country!” You see, the thing about XC was — that fat little tire was always looking for a field to roll on. The engine might quit anytime: that was official doctrine. It never did quit, even then — much less now. But the fear of it was carefully drilled into you. Any time at all, in the midst of the most delicate figure-8, when you were trying to make some farmer’s barn hold still off your wing-tip, bang! would come a tremendous silence as your instructor pulled back the throttle and said: “Forced landing!” Then you quickly picked a field (really, you were supposed to have one all picked out: “Always Have a Field in Mind”) and you went gliding down in a long S-turn — through the “Key Position” — down across the trees — down into the field — down until the grass began to tickle your tires. Then he was kind enough to open

From *A Flier’s World* by Wolfgang Langewiesche. Copyright 1951 by Wolfgang Langewiesche. McGraw-Hill Book Company.

the throttle for you and let you climb out. To shoot a good Forced Landing was considered about three-quarters of the Art of Flying. And so you judged country mostly by its fields.

New England rated low indeed. Those gloomy hills, all wooded. Those nasty little pastures, with the naked rock poking up right through the middle. Those ugly stone walls around every plot of land — just imagine you overshot and rolled into one of *those!* “Horrible country. Not a decent field in sight.” Then I caught myself: “What *are* you saying, man? You are supposed to find this charming. Don’t you have any education? This is the cradle. . . . Hell, you *know* it’s charming. Look at that white steeple nestled in the green. Trouble with you, you can’t take it; you’re scared!” But of course I was right in the first place: it *was* a horribly tough country they picked to settle; there *was* no decent field, nor a flat place to put one. They themselves called it a Howling Wilderness, and it very nearly starved them to death. Besides, most of them left it, first chance they got, for points west.

How different North Dakota felt! I had spent a week flying in the canyons of Idaho — a mountainside off each wing tip, a wild river below — with the thought of engine failure strictly repressed, of course: no use thinking about it where you simply can’t afford one! I had flown down into North Dakota through night, a black night, with nothing visible but the beacons along the airway; and again the forced-landing idea had been switched off — there are lots of badlands on that route. Toward morning, not to get too low on gas, I had sat down on an Auxiliary Field to wait for daylight. It was deserted. (Those fields are not built to serve a town, but to serve the airway — they sit there, every hundred miles or so, their boundaries outlined by lights, just in case.) Parked there under the beacon tower, I had fallen asleep right in the airplane.

I woke up, and it was daylight. I started her up, and took off. Still dull in mind, I cleared the fence. There it was: Landings unlimited. You cleared the fence, and you had cleared everything. As far as the eye could see, big fields — flat as a table and bigger than airports. And smoothly cultivated: where farm machinery can roll, an airplane tire can also roll. It was fall, and most of them were stubble. The nice, combed-looking stubble of machine-sown wheat: a guaranteed surface, along with unlimited room.

“This,” I thought, “is 100 per cent O.K. This is the rose without the thorn; this is the meal that is all dessert; this goes in easy.” In fact, I swear I had a strong sensation as if I were a little boy again and had just been handed a dish of whipped cream with chocolate.

“I think I’ll just roll my wheels on that one.” I had only flown a minute, but why not? “I’ll fly straight for exactly three minutes, and then close my throttle.” Nothing to it — just glide straight ahead. I thought it would be fun to roll up to a fence and jump it and sit right down again, so I did. Why not? “I think I’ll spiral up to 1,000 feet and cut my ignition and stop my prop.” Done.

Now, I don't claim it is a red-hot and brand-new idea that North Dakota is different from New England. I tell it to show you how a pilot reacts to the country: he does react; he can't help it. And not as a tourist; he is not ever "just looking." He has business with the country, and the country with him.

I once had a piece of business with the Missouri River. I had undertaken to fly a small seaplane from Coast to Coast; up the Missouri, down the Columbia. Don't ask me why — I guess it was to prove it could be done. It was a short-range ship. You had to gas up often. Each time, you became a boat. For a little while, you were a river pilot, back in Mark Twain's day. True, Mark Twain piloted on the Mississippi. But he himself says that the Missouri is twice as tricky, and a Missouri pilot twice as much of a pilot.

"The river was an awful solitude, then," wrote Mark Twain in 1883, as of the early French explorers' day. "And it is now, over most of its stretch." It *still* is, old man. Flood plain, with willows; for miles on either side, it's empty. I would always land near a bridge, because only for a bridge would a road come to the river; and only on a road could I hope to get to a filling station — a 5-gallon can in each hand. But a bridge is an obstruction; and near it may be that fearful seaplane-trap: an electric wire strung across the river (hard to see). So I would land a little way off, or what looked from the air like a little way. Once on the water, I would be deep in that solitude, the bridge out of sight around the bend.

The water was silent, oil-like, smooth, a very thin mud. How muddy it was! You got your hands wet, handling the ropes; then the western air would dry them, and they were suddenly caked with a thin layer of dry mud; you'd rub your hands and it would come off as a fine dust.

Now to get back to the bridge you had to "read the river." But from 5 feet up, not from the lordly pilot-house atop the Texas-deck. Those ripples — did they mean a puff of wind, or a shallow place? This up-welling here — that was a log, stuck under the water. It might rip your pontoons open. (You call that a "Sleeper.") There was also the kind of log that is caught on one end; the other end slowly comes out of the water, and then the current pushes it down again. (That, you call a "Sawyer.")

My pontoons drew about 8 inches of water — about the same as the old river steamboats. I ran aground many times. The old steamboats did, too. They would then walk — put a spar overboard and stem it against the bottom and push. I did much the same — rolled up my trousers, waded out, and lifted on one wing-tip to push one pontoon forward a few feet; then waded over to the other side and pushed the other one forward. Hard, wet, slow work. "Mark Twain?" I used to think: "Mark O-point-twain!"

So, deep in the twentieth century, air age and all, you personally met this continent: its mountains, plains, rivers. You were an emigrant, thinking about decent fields. You were a river pilot or a canal man or a wagoner or a mountain

man. You walked down Fifth Avenue thinking — hey, you people, I know a way to get across the Rockies with one single hump that you can clear at 6,000 feet. (Maria's Pass, up near Glacier Park — I had dragged that seaplane through there.) Of course nobody cared — you were a hundred years out of step.

For instance, about the Alleghenies. To us they still were what they once had been to everybody — a big barrier. They are not high, but if there isn't some weather cooking on one side, it's cooking on the other, or on the ridges; they get moisture from the Atlantic and the Great Lakes and the Gulf. In those days, few pilots knew how to fly blind; none of us small fry did. So, when the clouds were down on the ridges, the barrier was closed.

I remember my first trip over the Hell-Stretch — where the New York-Cleveland airway goes across the ridges. (The early airmail pilots had called it that.) That day, a low, gray, ragged ceiling kept us low. In the low perspective, the valleys and the towns are hidden. You don't realize there are really quite decent fields down in the river bottoms. All you see is an endless forest, coming at you in waves — a green-blue, melancholy. Some of the waves were high. We tried to climb, and bits of cloud started slapping us in the face. It was Not Good.

Well, it's not supposed to be good! I found this later in a book. Talleyrand had once traveled this same stretch. He had crashed through these very woods under us. The branches slapped him in the face as the clouds now slapped us. He lost sight of his servant. He called out, "Are you here?" And the fellow answered, "Unfortunately, my lord, I am." That seems to be the built-in feeling of that country. I now looked at my passenger, saying, with my eyebrows: "Are you still with me?" He pointed down, he pointed all around, and then held his nose.

You discovered anew, for yourself, things that once had to be discovered. For example (still talking about the Alleghenies), that you could fly at water level from the seaboard to the Middle West: you got right on top of the historic Erie Canal. That way, you could squeak through under clouds that were solid on the hills. Another bad-weather route went through Pennsylvania. Up the Susquehanna River to Lock Haven; up another valley to Altoona. This far, you could fly even if perhaps it was like a tunnel, valley sides with the ceiling across it: there were nice long fields along the river. At Altoona you sat down. You had now only one ridge between you and Johnstown, which is the headwaters of the Ohio. So, you sat and smoked cigarettes and watched the ridge. When it came out of the clouds, you hopped into your ship, spiraled up at wide-open throttle, and went for that ridge. On top, you picked up the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. You got right on the quadruple rail and scooted down the incline into Johnstown. There, you got on the river and wound your way out to more open country. Clever, isn't it? Well, I found out this was exactly the idea of the old Pennsylvania Canal — an engineering wonder that flourished just before the railroad age. They took the barges to the very same spot. Then

they had a marine railway that hauled the barges bodily up that same ridge, and down that same incline on the other side. There they could float away to points west. It goes to show: a place sends out something like a magnetic field — a field of ideas. You fly through there, and those ideas generate in your mind.

Now flying has changed. You have more speed, more radio, perhaps two engines. Even with only one, the forced-landing obsession has faded out. You try again to treat the country with contempt. You try to think of it as pure expanse — graph paper, yours to make lines on. But it still doesn't work out that way. The country still makes itself felt. In fact, speed sometimes makes you feel it more. It's like a phonograph record: the needle has to slide to bring out the tune.

I like to see East change to West. I like that moment, on the New York-Pittsburgh-St. Louis route, when you get to the last ridge, called Laurel Ridge. There, at the end, the dislikable Alleghenies are almost real mountains. On the brow of the ridge, facing west, there is a bald, stony strip, scoured clean by the west winds and the sleet and the rain. An airway beacon stands up there, alone. Then the stuff falls steeply away under you. You slide out across there, and you enter the Middle West. It feels different. It feels easy-like. Not that the country turns nice right away. Right around Pittsburgh, it is a tortuous jumble — small, steep hills, slag fields, deep-cut railroad tracks, lots of smoke. But you know it will calm down. A pilot gets the habit of "think ahead of the airplane." The Now and Here is no longer so important in the faster airplane: now and here, the engine percolates, the weather is O.K., the gadgets work, you have lots of gas. What's ahead is what matters. And so you study cloud shapes, listen to weather reports, and feel out the situation ahead. And there, you know, comes flat country, come open fields, come comfortable cities, big airports, runways with clear approaches. The squeeze that makes the Easterner elbowy and unfriendly squeezes also in flying. In the East, airports are small, obstructed by power lines, hills, gas works, squeezed in between the cemeteries and the insane asylums. West of the Alleghenies, they give you room.

So now, if the ceiling is low, you can stay under it and push on; you know the terrain gets better all the time. Or you can go on top of the overcast; you know that when you want to get down, no hills will stick up into a low ceiling. And so you feel, ahead of time, way up in the air, that certain ease and plenty of the Middle West.

Presently, you pick up the section lines. Now *that* is something. It is really one of the odd sights of the world, and it is strictly an air-sight: a whole country laid out in a mathematical gridwork, in sections one mile square each; exact, straight-sided, lined up in endless lanes that run precisely — and I mean precisely — North-South and East-West. It makes the country look like a giant real-estate development: which it is. One section has 640 acres. A quarter section,

160 acres, is the historical Homestead. You sold your goods, you crossed the sea somehow, and they gave you *that*! "Land-office business" used to be done in this matter, and no wonder.

Get this right. These section lines are not something that an attentive eye can distinguish in the landscape. They are the landscape. Compared with this gridwork, the natural landscape — flat here, a little rolling there, a river valley, a pond — just can't quite catch your attention. In fact, the natural landscape has long fitted itself to this scheme. A man has a wood lot, his neighbor a corn-field; the boundary between woods and field is of course the fence line; but the fence line is part of the grid. More than people know, all their coming and going is channeled by that grid. Their roads — except for the biggest highways — run and jog along the grid. In fact, from the air, the lines are mostly marked by roads.

For flying, the section lines are wonderful. They make this country in reality just what a pilot wants country to be — graph paper. You can time your shadow with a stop watch across two lines, and get your exact speed. You can head the airplane down a section line and check your compass. But you hardly need a compass. You simply draw your course on the map and see what angle it makes. Then you cross the sections at the same angle. You can't miss. If you want to go exactly west, you get on a fence and follow it. The fence presently leaves off; the line becomes a highway. The highway curves off, but the line goes on as a fence again, as a lane between fields, as a farm road, then perhaps as the main street of a town, a highway again. It is easy on the brain.

It's true what the foreigners say — it all looks pretty much alike. A town comes out of the haze, moves through below you, falls back — only (you sometimes think) to run through some secret passageway and plant itself again in front of you!

Flying, you tell these towns apart as you tell stars — by constellation. This one, of about the fourth magnitude, with a smaller one to the north of it — that must be this one on the map. Those three-in-line, that's those.

What is it like, this American town? Well it isn't crowned by a castle, that's for sure; nor by a cathedral either. By an insurance skyscraper, more likely; or by a hotel, perhaps; but most likely by nothing. It is not fortified, and never was: no crowded Old Town, no ring-shaped boulevard where the Walls used to be. And it is not a village.

It is always a small city. It is laid out with streets at right angles, and has at its center a little Downtown, perhaps only two streets crossing each other, perhaps a few blocks. In there, it's naked and stony; it achieves a certain businesslike ugliness. There is a well-developed parking problem. And at night, that downtown core glows with bright lights and red neon signs, where the seller entertains the buyer and the boy the girl.

The rest is quiet streets with little houses and lots of trees. It fades out into the farmland in an indifferent way — streets and avenues already marked out

on the ground, but still empty. You can tell — it expects to grow. Add a few blocks on the outskirts, and the downtown gets a bit more stony. Keep adding, and Farmerville becomes Bloomington, Bloomington becomes Springfield, Springfield becomes, say, Indianapolis.

There is always a Wrong Side of the Tracks to the town. In the thirties, when the price of paint made a bigger difference, this used to show up plainly. There is always a giant high school, and certain other standard furniture — a gasoline bulk plant, race track, “institution” (maybe a Veterans’ Hospital, maybe a teachers’ college, maybe a county poorhouse). These things are marked on the flying maps, not because it is remarkable that a town should have them, but it helps you tell the towns apart. This town has its high school at the east end. If this is the town I think it is, there should be an institution on the north edge. Sure, there it is. You make a pencil mark on the map and fly on.

Somewhere now, about a third of the way across the country, you notice something has changed. The fields are bigger; the air is clearer. Things have opened up. There is less junk around the landscape — I mean by junk, I guess, things of which a pilot cannot immediately see the sense and purpose: a clump of trees here, a different-colored patch of field there, an old abandoned factory building — that sort of thing. The landscape is tidier. Each farmhouse sits on its land as if it had just been set there; each fence shows straight and strong, as if it had just been strung. Each town seems to say: “Look, I am a town.” Things have a sharper edge to them.

What’s happened is that you have crossed the line between the forest and the prairie — the line that was there in Indian days. The white man has cleared the forest and plowed the prairie, and has made them both superficially alike — both farmland. But still the difference shows. Maybe it’s the different color of the soil. Maybe it’s that up to here, the country has been darkened by the last poor remnants of the old dark forests — a clump of trees, a woodlot — and here the trees leave off. Maybe it is simply the drier, clearer air. At any rate, you have moved one more notch west.

Here, in the less cluttered country, your map reading must change. A town may be so small that it would rate only a circle, o, farther east: here, it gets the full treatment. The map shows it as a yellow area, shaped like the town’s built-up area. A town may be so small that farther east it wouldn’t be on the map at all: here it gets at least an o, and a name. This, I like. It reminds you of the way each person counts for more out west. Go west, young man, and put yourself on the map.

And I like the names of those towns. It used to be that a prince would graciously call a town after himself — Williamstown or Fredericksburg or Charles’ Rest, or what not. Out here, the ordinary man sat himself down, founded himself a town, and named it, by gosh, after himself. I like to check them as I fly: here comes Charlie. Howdy, Riley. *Wie geht’s*, Hoehne. Hello,

Kline. Landusky, Henderson, Milliken, Goessel, Weir, Swink, McPhee: how are you doing?

Or the man would name the town after a woman of his: Beulah, Maybell, Dolores. I had often flown over a town named Beatrice, Nebraska, and I had thought: "Poor Beatrice, whoever you were (farmer's wife? railroad president's daughter?) — that really wasn't much of a present to give a woman." It is a nice town and all that, but it isn't exactly — you know — it hasn't got *glamour*, out here in the sun-blasted country between Omaha and Wichita. (It hasn't got glamour if you were over Manhattan yesterday and will be over the Hollywood hills tomorrow.) Well, I came over Beatrice again one night. Now people don't know this, but a town at night is the most beautiful thing made by man in the past hundred years — especially an American town, where they don't spare the current. A brave sight, too, out there, where towns are far apart, with a lot of darkness in between. People went out into this vastness, built a home town here, and lit all those lights. A proud sight, just by being there. And I thought: "Beatrice, wherever you are now, you ought to be proud. It looks real nice."

Now, halfway across the country, come the Great Plains. It happens fast, in a matter of minutes. A grassy butte sticks up right through the fields. A bit of badlands shows up. The pattern of the farms opens up to detour around it and comes together again. A gully shows up — Grand Canyon in miniature. You know the signs. You are getting west another notch. You hitch yourself up in your seat and take new notice.

Ahead, the country rises a step, and the step is a bluff: its face is eroded; it grins at you like the teeth of a skull. As you pass over, the farms fall back. The last you see of them is a mile-square wheat field draped over some hump, abandoned. It reminds you of a wrecked ship on a beach — tried to go where it should not be, and got in trouble. Ahead are the vast khaki plains, rising toward the West. There's nothing to see but vastness, clarity of air, distance. The sun glistens on a window of some ranch house, 50 miles away. A train, very far away, is a small black thing under a smoke plume, like a ship at sea.

You head straight out there, and the world fades out: badlands; the dry, bare hills. That fellow yammering about the "Lone Prairie" — he's been there. You suddenly remember you have no water aboard, no strong shoes, no big hat. You are lucky if you see a ranch, hidden deep down in some secret canyon, in a patch of green. More likely, you see next to nothing: a barbed wire fence; some cattle; a windmill pumping beside a water hole.

You fall in line and follow the railroad. Everybody and everything else does, in that country; even the Civil Airways. Now the United States slenders down to a mere strip — river-plus-railroad-plus-highway. Along this strip are the irrigated fields, the towns, the airports. And the railroad is the great sight — doubly great by default of everything else. Its long straightways and mathe-



matical curves, the way it goes on and on through empty country up toward the West.

Finally these bright yellow-green plains rise under you like a wave about to break; over the crest comes a white spot that turns out to be snow. There, between two high mountains, is a gateway, where the river comes out. Toward this gate you have been steering all along; so was the railroad; so was the highway; so were the radio beams along the Airway. You go in through that gate, and East has changed to West.

The air view is an honest view: "You can't kid *me*" is your attitude as you look down. "So *that's* how it is." For example, the great, famous dams — Hoover, Norris, Grand Coulee. In the ground view, the thing you marvel at is how big they are. The glamour photographs show them that way — small human figures, dwarfed by this gigantic wall behind them. Well, from the air, it's the other way round. It strikes you how small they are. Hoover Dam especially — it's actually hard to find! The eye sweeps all over the naked rock and the shores of Lake Mead before you find it — hidden down in a gulch. It makes you smile. Some boy has jammed a rock into this stream at just the right spot — and has managed to dam up one hell of a big lake. Small cause, big effect: clever little devil. And that, I'm sure, is the correct view. An engineer would say so. He would always try to build the smallest possible dam, not the biggest.

Or, New York City. What's it all about? On the ground, why you know: *Time*, *Life*, *Look*, *Quick*, and *Harper's*; Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborn; Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Beane; NBC, CBS, ABC; words, ideas, paper of all sorts. But, from the air, I regret to state, New York looks like a place where steamships tie up to piers. The piers catch your eye, not Radio City or the Wall Street skyscrapers. Manhattan, with all those tentacles sticking out into the water, looks like some biological exhibit — some organ specially developed to draw nourishment from the sea.

The foreground doesn't hide the background. Looking down at a place from the air, you see everything, literally, that's there. You may not notice everything; you may not understand the half of it; but at least you've seen it. What's this? Why does it look so odd? It's been amusing, for example, to watch the college campuses: the old fake, ivy-covered Gothic; the stadium with its vast parking space; the new research factory; the rows of Quonset huts. 'Tain't Oxford, brother. You run your own private census all the time. This thing — why do I see more and more of this? Not much can happen in the country that you don't notice, often ahead of the papers and magazines. For example, much will be written soon about our cities, how they have grown in area, not to say exploded; how the FHA town, way out on the potato fields, is taking the place of the tenement; and so on. Why sure: pilots have seen that grow for years. . . .

## QUESTIONS

1. Compare the New England and North Dakota countryside from the flyer's point of view. What fact of geography makes the Easterner less friendly than the Westerner?
2. What experience did Langewiesche have in common with Mark Twain? with Talleyrand?
3. Explain "Go west, young man, and put yourself on the map."
4. What does the air view tell about the American character?
5. Find several comparisons with commonplace objects by which Langewiesche makes his pictures more vivid.

John Steinbeck

## The Grapes of Wrath

*John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath, about the dispossessed farmers of the Dust Bowl who migrated to California seeking employment, was a smash hit both as a novel (Pulitzer Prize, half a million copies printed the first year, translated into many foreign languages) and as a movie. A Californian "of giant height," Steinbeck himself worked as a fruit picker, cattle rancher, caretaker, etc. and knew his subject thoroughly. Tortilla Flat (1935), Of Mice and Men (1937), and Cannery Row (1945) are other successful realistic novels of his about American workers. "I'm not even a finished writer yet," Steinbeck once said, sincerely; he is an expert in marine biology and would rather read scientific books than fiction.*

To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma, the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth. The plows crossed and recrossed the rivulet marks. The last rains lifted the corn quickly and scattered weed colonies and grass along the sides of the roads so that the gray country and the dark red country began to disappear under a green cover. In the last part of May the sky grew pale and the clouds that had hung in high puffs for so long in the spring were dissipated. The sun flared down on the growing corn day after day until a line of brown spread along the edge of each green bayonet. The clouds appeared, and went away, and in a while they did not try any more. The weeds grew darker green to protect themselves, and they did not spread

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any more. The surface of the earth crusted, a thin hard crust, and as the sky became pale, so the earth became pale, pink in the red country and white in the gray country.

In the water-cut gullies the earth dusted down in dry little streams. Gophers and ant lions started small avalanches. And as the sharp sun struck day after day, the leaves of the young corn became less stiff and erect; they bent in a curve at first, and then, as the central ribs of strength grew weak, each leaf tilted downward. Then it was June, and the sun shone more fiercely. The brown lines on the corn leaves widened and moved in on the central ribs. The weeds frayed and edged back toward their roots. The air was thin and the sky more pale; and every day the earth paled.

In the roads where the teams moved, where the wheels milled the ground and the hooves of the horses beat the ground, the dirt crust broke and the dust formed. Every moving thing lifted the dust into the air: a walking man lifted a thin layer as high as his waist, and a wagon lifted the dust as high as the fence tops, and an automobile boiled a cloud behind it. The dust was long in settling back again.

When June was half gone, the big clouds moved up out of Texas and the Gulf, high heavy clouds, rain-heads. The men in the fields looked up at the clouds and sniffed at them and held wet fingers up to sense the wind. And the horses were nervous while the clouds were up. The rain-heads dropped a little spattering and hurried on to some other country. Behind them the sky was pale again and the sun flared. In the dust there were drop craters where the rain had fallen, and there were clean splashes on the corn, and that was all.

A gentle wind followed the rain clouds, driving them on northward, a wind that softly clashed the drying corn. A day went by and the wind increased, steady, unbroken by gusts. The dust from the roads fluffed up and spread out and fell on the weeds beside the fields, and fell into the fields a little way. Now the wind grew strong and hard and it worked at the rain crust in the corn fields. Little by little the sky was darkened by the mixing dust, and the wind felt over the earth, loosened the dust, and carried it away. The wind grew stronger. The rain crust broke and the dust lifted up out of the fields and drove gray plumes into the air like sluggish smoke. The corn threshed the wind and made a dry, rushing sound. The finest dust did not settle back to earth now, but disappeared into the darkening sky.

The wind grew stronger, whisked under stones, carried up straws and old leaves, and even little clods, marking its course as it sailed across the fields. The air and the sky darkened and through them the sun shone redly, and there was a raw sting in the air. During a night the wind raced faster over the land, dug cunningly among the rootlets of the corn, and the corn fought the wind with its weakened leaves until the roots were freed by the prying wind and then each

stalk settled wearily sideways toward the earth and pointed the direction of the wind.

The dawn came, but no day. In the gray sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk; and as that day advanced, the dusk slipped back toward darkness, and the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn.

Men and women huddled in their houses, and they tied handkerchiefs over their noses when they went out, and wore goggles to protect their eyes.

When the night came again it was black night, for the stars could not pierce the dust to get down, and the window lights could not even spread beyond their own yards. Now the dust was evenly mixed with the air, an emulsion of dust and air. Houses were shut tight, and cloth wedged around doors and windows, but the dust came in so thinly that it could not be seen in the air, and it settled like pollen on the chairs and tables, on the dishes. The people brushed it from their shoulders. Little lines of dust lay at the door sills.

In the middle of that night the wind passed on and left the land quiet. The dust-filled air muffled sound more completely than fog does. The people, lying in their beds, heard the wind stop. They awakened when the rushing wind was gone. They lay quietly and listened deep into the stillness. Then the roosters crowed, and their voices were muffled, and the people stirred restlessly in their beds and wanted the morning. They knew it would take a long time for the dust to settle out of the air. In the morning the dust hung like fog, and the sun was as red as ripe new blood. All day the dust sifted down from the sky, and the next day it sifted down. An even blanket covered the earth. It settled on the corn, piled up on the tops of the fence posts, piled up on the wires; it settled on roofs, blanketed the weeds and trees.

The people came out of their houses and smelled the hot stinging air and covered their noses from it. And the children came out of the houses, but they did not run or shout as they would have done after a rain. Men stood by their fences and looked at the ruined corn, drying fast now, only a little green showing through the film of dust. The men were silent and they did not move often. And the women came out of the houses to stand beside their men — to feel whether this time the men would break. The women studied the men's faces secretly, for the corn could go, as long as something else remained. The children stood near by, drawing figures in the dust with bare toes, and the children sent exploring senses out to see whether men and women would break. The children peeked at the faces of the men and women, and then drew careful lines in the dust with their toes. Horses came to the watering troughs and nuzzled the water to clear the surface dust. After a while the faces of the watching men lost their bemused perplexity and became hard and angry and resistant. Then the women knew that they were safe and that there was no break. Then they asked, What'll we do? And the men replied, I don't know. But it was all right.

The women knew it was all right, and the watching children knew it was all right. Women and children knew deep in themselves that no misfortune was too great to bear if their men were whole. The women went into the houses to their work, and the children began to play, but cautiously at first. As the day went forward the sun became less red. It flared down on the dust-blanketed land. The men sat in the doorways of their houses; their hands were busy with sticks and little rocks. The men sat still — thinking — figuring.

#### QUESTIONS

1. List color words in the first paragraph.
2. List the most unusual active verbs throughout, e.g., “the sun flared.”
3. What figures of speech does Steinbeck use in describing the dust?
4. Why did the women watch the faces of the men after the dust storm? What might have happened if the men had reacted differently?
5. What are some good sentences showing human reactions to the drought?

Sally Carrighar

## The Cutthroat Trout

*Sally Carrighar spent a winter at Jackson's Hole, in the Teton Mountains of Wyoming, to gather material for her narratives about the animals there. She planned to have the stories “as accurate as I can make them . . . each detail will be as other observers will find it.” This was also the method of her earlier One Day on Beetle Rock (1944). One Day at Teton Marsh describes a single day in the lives of the animals, a fall day when “an equinoctial storm sweeping down from Canada” brought “the first touch of winter.” The story of the trout was suggested by a naturalist's comment that animals make mistakes. The theme, says Miss Carrighar, is hinted at in the sentence: “The wisdom of instinct, as of intelligence, can be disregarded, and it also can be drawn upon.”*

Only a sharpened, seeing look in the Trout's eyes proved that he had wakened. No shift of the eyes had flashed their crystalline shine. The wrongness of some

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sound had roused him. He peered from his nook along the west shore of the pond. Was there a glisten of wet fur in the polished darkness? Or did he see the pale clouds hung in the water, moonlight, which had turned to luminous froth the bubbles clinging to the underwater plants?

His shelter was a groove among the sticks of the beaver house. He was holding himself as still as the sticks, so quiet in their tangle that a slippery ooze had grown upon them. His breathing lightened until the water drained through his gills with no perceptible beat, no pulse to send its circular waves out through the pond, revealing that he lay at the center of them.

From the edge of the Beaver's sunken pile of aspen boughs a string of small globes, faintly silver, smoked to the top. Some animal must have touched a branch and rubbed out air that was held within its fur. The water swayed; the creature had begun to swim. Its stroke was not familiar to the Trout, not one of the rhythms that he knew as harmless or a threat. It had more pulse than the Beaver's paddling or the striding of a moose. It was rougher than the swimming of a fish and heavier than a muskrat's sculling. At first the Trout must steady himself with his fins to keep from being slapped against the sticks. But the underwater waves diminished. The last of them struck the shores and clattered back, a liquid echo. The only motion in the pond then was its regular mottling flow, a current from the brook to the beaver dam.

The surging had torn the film of sleep from a thousand little minds. After it ceased, constrained breaths made the pond seem lifeless. But hunger was a danger too. It rose above the fear of the animals, one by one — of the smallest first. Soon the twinkling prowls of the mayfly nymphs, the quick strokes of the water-boatmen, and the foraging of even tinier creatures mingled in a hum like that of insects in the air, but louder. The lightest sounds were wave-beats in the pond. To the Trout's ears came the twanging of minute activity.

Night was nearly over. The Trout knew by the brightening of the water, by his hunger, and the stiffness in his muscles. He saw the webs of the pelican start to push the bird's breast over the top of the pond. Its wing-tips dipped in the water, the webs were shoveling back with greater vigor, the breast was shrinking upward. Only the kick of the feet now broke the surface. When the bird was gone, the fin on the Trout's back stood a little higher, and a ripple scalloped from its front edge to the rear.

The Beaver swam to the entrance of the house and climbed in onto the floor. His angry voice came through the wall. He was driving from his bed the muskrat he allowed to share his home. The feet of a mother moose and her calf had waded off the bank. They dragged their splashes down the shore to a patch of horse-tail. The big soft muffles plunged beneath the surface, closed around the plants and pulled them dripping from the water. Even yet the Trout would not risk showing himself. He was the wariest of all the animals in the pond.

Beside the stranger's threat, a more familiar danger kept him hiding. Three

times a day the Osprey dived in the pond for fish. The Trout's good time-sense held him under cover when its strike was due: at dawn, as soon as the hawk could see its prey; at noon; and at sunset, with the first receding wave of light. Most mornings the Trout went out for an early swim, returning to his nook before he would be visible from the air; but not on this day.

His wait was an exquisite balancing of instincts. Hunger was sufficient reason to start forth, and the pond's flow was a stimulation. The current, passing through the walls of the beaver house, divided around the Trout. All night its touch had slid along his skin, from nose to tail, as though he ceaselessly swam forward. Now he was awake to feel the fine strokes down his sides — the touch of moving water; only the sight of moving prey could be more quickening to a trout. But he submitted to the quieting urge. He stayed in his groove, with ears and lateral lines both listening for the hawk.

The fluffs of moonlight disappeared in a tremulous green shine. No wind rocked the surface now, but the Trout could see the current draining toward the dam. It was a checkered wavering, unhurried and unaltering. Daylight reached the bottom, where the water's ripples had been fixed in sandy silt.

Directly over him the Trout could look into the air. His view was circular, and small; his own length would have spanned it. Beyond that opening the surface was an opaque silver cover, stretching to the shores. Reflected in it were the floor of the pond, the swimming animals, and the underwater plants. The Trout could see the lustrous belly of a leopard frog spring past. He also saw, in the mirror spread above, the frog's bronze, spotted back. The pond was a shallow layer of the world, with a ceiling on which its life was repeated upside-down.

Upon the surface crashed a huge light-feathered breast. Claws reached and speared a bullhead. A brown throat, then a beak and head came through the top of the pond, and wings and tail. A shower of bubbles scattered downward as the long wings lowered in a sweep. The wings began to lift the Osprey. A final thrashing took him out of the surface, leaving the reverberations of his dive.

The wariness of the Trout released its check. He floated from his groove. He still seemed motionless, as if the current had dislodged him. Slowly his fins commenced a ribbonlike stroke. His tail pressed gently on the water, left and right.

Freeing his entire strength in a tail-thrust then, he was across the pond. A spinning turn, and, energy closely held, he slanted toward the bottom silt — the touch, and a spasm of upward speed had flung him into the dangerous dazzling air.

A slicing dive back deep in the pond, a glimpse of another trout, and he whipped in its pursuit. But just before his teeth would have nicked its tail, he whirled, and the trout ahead whirled too, in perfect unison.

He cut forward in the channel of the current, throwing his tail from side to side as he tried to find in his own speed some full outlet for his strength. The water of the pond would give him nowhere more than a mild and yielding pressure. He was a native cutthroat of the Snake, a turbulent swift river, but the placid pond and little brook that fed it were the only home that he had known. In early summer of the year the beavers built the pond, his parents had come up the brook to spawn. The new dam trapped them and their offspring. The river poured along the east side of the marsh, so near that the Trout could feel its deep vibration. He had not seen it, but his spirit cried for its stronger flow, its more combative force.

Yet idle swimming could be pleasant. He glided to the backwash past the brook, toward food not scented, seen, or heard, but certain to appear. Sculled by his tail, he wove through bare elastic water-lily stalks, beneath a cover of translucent leaves. He was at rest in motion, fins outspread to ride the smooth support, his slippery skin quick-sliding through the wetness. But he stiffened, shot ahead, bent nose to tail, kicked back the tail in a sharp return, perhaps to savor the grace of a body incapable of awkwardness in an element incapable of angles: beautiful play.

He saw a streaming like fine grasses drawn by the current — dace! With a forward spring he snatched a minnow at the side of the school. Alarm flashed through them all, and the leaders swung to flee into the brook. The milling of the others would have made each one available to the Trout, but he swerved away.

He'd seen a pair of reedy, jointed legs, seeming to be rooted in the silt, but still, not quivering as reeds would in the flow of the pond. The dace swam toward them. The dace had left the safety of the shallows because a harmless moose was splashing there. The Trout had captured one, and now the great blue heron certainly would catch another. But would not catch the Trout! Already he was far beyond the stab of the bird's beak.

Near the shore the water swished with the feet of ducks. A quick look: no mergansers' feet, with paddle-toes for diving, there among the webs of mallards, pintails, and of baldpates. The Trout swam under them. He need not dread an enemy's unexpected dive here while the feet were moving the ducks about in search of food, while they were easy, pushing webfuls of water back and folding in and drawing forward; not while one foot hung, a pivot, and the other swung an oval breast; or both of a duck's webs splashed at the surface, holding him bill-down. As long as no fear tensed the feet, the Trout felt safe.

The long stripe on a pintail's neck shone white as it lowered the bird's head, swanlike, to the bottom. But swiftly it was pulled above the surface. Now all the feet were quiet, spread from the feathered bellies, ready for a leap. The Trout, alert, poised in midwater.



He did not know what animal had frightened the ducks. While they continued their wary wait, the white keel of the pelican dipped through the surface, slid ahead, and, checked by its wide webs, glided to a stop. The Trout streamed off, away from the watchful ducks, and gradually forgot their warning.

When he was a young fish, nearly every animal he saw seemed hungry for him. One by one then he outgrew the threat of frogs, kingfishers, snakes, and larger trout. He learned the tricks of human fishermen. Minks and mergansers chased him still but could not capture him. No other creature in the pond was quite so swift. And he almost was too heavy to be carried by an osprey. Soon the Trout might reach security that few wild creatures know, unless the alien of the early morning proved a danger.

Every instinct whispers some command; for him the loudest command was always, *live*. He listened for it, always deferred his other urges to it. Survival was so strong an impulse in him that the most involuntary workings of his body helped him hide. The pale sheen on his belly matched the cover of the pond, to an eye below. One watching from across the surface might confuse the iridescence of his scales with scales of sunlight on the ripples. The black spots spattered on his skin disguised his shape when seen from any angle. To a mate or rival he might show two crimson gashes on his throat, but usually he folded them beneath his jaws.

When his alarm had quieted, he started to the beaver house. First he passed a bank of sedges. In summer when their shade was green, the Trout had turned to emerald here. This autumn day the grass was tawny, and its color, focused in his eyes, had caused the grains of yellow in his skin to scatter out and tint him olive. If the inborn guardian in his tissues could arrange it, he would live. Yet other animals also had ingenious aids, some useful in attack.

He circled the island on the dam, now moving through a tunnel of grasses, bent with the tips of the blades awash. The sun was laying gold bars over him. He moved with a little flourish, for it seemed that he was really safe. Beyond the far side of the island a floating log pressed down the top of the pond. He started under — and was circled with a crash.

Escape! Escape to a nook in the dam! He split the water and was there. Wheeling, he shot in the hole and flung out his fins to check him. The water bulged in after him, as the one who chased him surged to a stop outside.

He had not seen what creature dived from the log. But his dash to the shelter, finished between heartbeats, was long enough to tell him that the other gained. Gained! Did panic echo, now, from days when the rush of most pursuers swept upon him like a wave?

His refuge was a space in the roots of a cottonwood, a dead tree anchoring the dam. Through interwoven fibers he could see his enemy, an animal he did not know, the Otter. The creature darted around the root-maze, trying to peer in. His eyes would show in one place, reaching for the Trout. A drive with a

quick foot and the brown-furred face would push into another hole. Eagerly it was weaving forward, cocked ears sharp as claws.

The Otter found a looser tangle, which his paws began to tear. The water was tainted with the scent of his excitement, acrid in the nostrils of the Trout. Close beside the Trout's face now a lean webbed paw had grasped a root. The claws were scratching as the toes kept tightening in convulsive grips. The Otter tried to burrow through, but the tangle held. Should the Trout attempt to reach the sturdier beaver house? No longer was there safety in a flight. He tensed his tail for a great thrust; yet he hesitated.

As suddenly then as if the Otter had seen a more accessible fish, he drew back out of the roots. He swam away with a vertical sculling, so that each roll took him to the top. The pulses in the water matched the surging that had stirred the pond at dawn.

The water beat for some time with his strokes and other creatures' startled movements. When the Trout could feel the light quick overlap of wavelets nearly spent, he knew that the Otter had gone to the far end of the pond. Then he could have fled to the beaver house, but he was waiting for the Osprey's midday dive. His new fear had not blurred his sense of the older menace.

The Osprey's perch was in the tree whose roots now hid him. He could not see the hawk, but when the spread wings glided from the upper boughs, they came into his air-view. He watched, as he never had from the beaver house, the way the Osprey hovered high above his victim, and how he plunged, so slanting his dive that he dropped from behind an unsuspecting fish. The Trout could recognize the jolting of the pond, the splashing as the Osprey struggled from the water, the sudden quiet, and widening of the echoes. The hawk returned in his air-view, carrying a mountain sucker to his branch. After he ate the fish, he flew back down to clean his claws. The Trout could see them cross the pond, thin hooks that cut the surface, trailing silvered sacs of air.

At last the water near the cottonwood roots sucked up, a motion meaning that some heavy animal was climbing out. A gust of drops fell onto the surface, as the creature shuddered the moisture from its fur. Feet ran over the top of the dam. As they passed the base of the tree, a sift of dirt fell through the roots and briefly stuck to the mucous coating on the skin of the Trout.

The pond was all in motion, for the wind had risen. The wind had stirred the marsh for several days, with short lulls. The Trout sensed that it brought a change of season. He could even taste the proof of summer's end, as dust, seeds, crumbling leaves and bark washed through the pond.

Bright-edged shadows of the waves were racing over the bottom silt. They swept across the underwater plants and seemed to shake them. The surface layer of the pond was blowing to the upper end of the backwash. There the water turned below, to sweep back down along the bottom. Against the dam

this flowing sheet rolled up. It pressed beneath the Trout's fins as a breeze will lift against the wings of a bird.

Whenever the wind would strain the top of the rigid dead tree, he could feel a pulling in the roots. Suddenly they began to writhe, to tear. The Trout was out of the maze and back in the beaver house as if the water had parted for him.

The Osprey's tree, upturned by the wind, fell into the pond. Billows met rebounding billows, whirls and eddies struggled, surges rocked the Trout. Gradually the violence quieted. Through a cloud of mud he dimly saw that the trunk of the tree was under the surface, propped up from the bottom on its boughs.

He settled himself to feel the current's long touch on his sides. But what disturbing change was this: the water's stroking soon was regular, yet took a new course — not from his nose to tail but downward now. The water's pressure was becoming lighter and its color rosier. The top of the pond was falling.

Inherited memories warned him that the change was ominous. But he did not leave his shelter, for it seemed that a greater danger threatened him outside: the Otter had returned. Sometimes the Trout could hear him in the water, sometimes out along the narrowing shores. The Trout would not be caught through panic. He lay in his nook and watched the surface drop.

Only when it reached the nook itself did he nose outside. Feeling the Otter's surging near, he turned down to a refuge lower in the wall. The top of the pond descended on him there. The water, draining off the bank beside the house, was roily, so that he could not see where he would go. But he entered it and let its motion guide him.

The currents were not flowing in familiar paths. They all converged in a powerful new suction. Since the roots of the cottonwood tree had been interwoven with the dam, its fall had torn apart the beaver's masonry of mud and sticks. The whole marsh seemed to be swirling toward the gap and plunging through it.

The Trout turned back. He would escape to the brook. He sensed that he must leave the doomed pond and would seek the water's source, as the other fish had done. He could not reach it. While he, the one most wary, stayed in the house to escape the Otter, the pond had shrunk below the mouth of the brook. The only water now connecting them was a thin sheet crinkling over a pebble bar.

Gone, lost above the surface, were the undercut banks of roots, the grassy tunnels, brush, and other shoreline hideaways. The Trout returned to the lower end of the pond. He glided with his fins streamlined in the depressions in his sides, and with so slight a sculling that he might be trying to make smoothness hide him. As he approached the dam, he saw the Otter. Dodging up the bottom toward the island, he slipped beneath the log, which drifted now with one end resting on the silt.

The Otter was walking on the pond floor, moving with a swing from his shoulders to his high arched rump. He somersaulted to the surface for a breath;

then looped and tumbled through the water. He straightened toward the hole in the dam. The fluent column of his body merged with the strands of the current, and he vanished.

The surface soon was shattered by a splash. The Otter was back. He had climbed up over the dam, beside the gap. He dived in, disappeared through the break, and again returned. A plunge, a joining with the water's sweep, and a swift ride: he had found a game.

The Trout was holding down his top fin, tense with fear. He spread it, and it struck the under side of the log. And yet his belly touched the silt. The log was the pond's last refuge, but the water soon would leave it.

Nothing in the Trout's experience could help him. He only could give himself to the urge that so intensely pressed to have him live. He waited until the Otter had dived and once more swung out through the hold. Leaving the log with a jet of speed, the Trout had reached the gap. A gushing force took hold of him. It hurled him through the break. Too quick for thought he dodged the wreckage of the dam. He leapt to pass the brink of the fall and dropped in the foam beneath. The cascade lightened, slowed, and he found himself in a shallow creek-bed, moving over cobblestones.

His high emotion quickened his choice of route: to the left, through streamers of emerald algae; right, along a slit between the stones; here a turn to miss a piece of driftwood, there to pass a boulder. The air was seldom far above his topmost fin. Sometimes he drew a breath of it, and it seared his gills with dryness. Avoiding one by one the unfamiliar hazards, he progressed.

His lateral lines were jarred by a new sound, a tremendous, heavy pouring. He swam around a bend in the creek and slid across a bar. And there a torrent plunged upon him, water more swift than any he had known. He was in the river, the violent tumult of the Snake.

It nearly overwhelmed him, but he found a milder flow along the bank. A curve there held a pool as in a shell. The pool was covered by a sweeper, a willow with its caught debris. The Trout discovered the refuge, entered it, and spiraled down into the cool green quiet.

Through the afternoon he stayed there, gaining back his poise and fitting his spirit to the strange new shape of his life. Most of the time he hung in the water, motionless, but now and then a ripple ran through his fins, and he chopped his breaths as with excitement. When the first gray wave of dusk washed over the pool, he rose to the top.

He swam along the bank, where small ripples pattered into crevices among the roots. The motion of the water here was light and peaceful like the pond's. Turning out, he met a crisper current, stimulating as the pond had never been. An even greater challenge growled from the center of the river, from grinding rocks that yielded to the push of water irresistibly strong. The Trout began to

slant his strokes into the torrent. With a leap he sprang to the very heart of its taut pressure. Enormous weight bore down upon him, but he gripped it, driving his way against it with exultant power.

To fight! To fight the turbulent flow! To sharpen his nerves on its chill; to cut quick arcs through the weaving water; to throw so much force into his muscles' swing that they could drive him upstream, past the rocks beneath, with the whole flood pounding toward him; to fling himself out into the air and see the river under him, a river wider than the pond, wide for his play — all this, the heritage of a trout, he knew now for the first time.

He faced the flood and, sculling exactly at the current's pace, remained above the same stone. Swirling past were many insects, blown in the river. He stayed to take a cricket only, for exhilaration sang in his nerves. He leapt —

But stopped, caught. Talons had stabbed into his flesh, were now locked through it. They were holding him in the center of a splash. A feathered throat was lowering before his eyes. Wings were sweeping down at the sides, enclosing him. The Osprey, forgotten in his conquest of the river, had made its sunset dive.

His torn nerves stung the Trout to action. The claws were powerful that bound him, but his thrashing bent their grip. They almost rigidly resisted, but they did bend. They were a pressure, like the river's force — to fight!

His instinct focused on one urge, to get himself in deeper water. Arching his body downward, he furiously tried to scull from side to side. The hawk's wings beat, attempting to lift his own weight and the Trout's. The wings and the driving paddle of the Trout's tail pulled against each other. So far the Trout had not been able to drag the bird down, but he held him under the surface of the water.

The river was aiding the fish. For the Osprey was growing desperate for a breath. At first the spines on the pads of his feet had pierced the skin of the Trout. They pressed their hold no longer. And the Trout could feel the talons in his flesh release their clutch. The hawk was trying to withdraw them, but their curving points were caught securely.

The bird and fish were swirling downstream. They jolted to a stop, snagged by the willow sweeper. The water's force was beating at them. It poured through the Osprey's feathers. The push of the wings was weakening. They suddenly relaxed, awash in the flow. And the claws were limp.

The Trout had fought another pressure, his exhaustion. When the straining of the talons ceased, he too relaxed. For long enough to gather a little strength, he waited. Then he began an intermittent thrashing. With bursts of effort he tried to jerk himself away. One by one the claws worked out, some slipping loose but more of them tearing through his sides. Finally a twist of his body sent him forward, free.

He turned down under the willow, lower and lower in the dark pool. With his flesh so cut, his lateral lines no longer clearly caught the echo of his motions,

thus to guide him. He was careful, therefore, not to swim against the bottom. His chin touched, and he sank upon a stone. The stone was smooth, and soft with slime-coat algae. Soon he had drifted over on his side. His eyes were dull and his fins closed. His consciousness sank lower.

The Trout had been so stimulated by the river that he had ignored his innate caution. But now he was listening again to instinct, not to the water's roar. As he lay and waited for his strength to seep back into him, no creature could have been more passive, none more acquiescent.

The water's cold had numbed the anguish in his severed nerves. It would draw his wounds together. Already it had put in winter sluggishness the parasites that possibly would enter his exposed flesh. And gradually, as he rested, the cold became a tonic to his temper. Cold was as sharpening to him as the warm sun is to insects. By midnight he was swimming experimentally around the bottom. He circled higher. The Osprey was gone from the willow sweeper. The Trout moved out of the pool.

He found a backwash near the bank and held himself on the edge, where a smooth flow passed. Moonlight, falling on the surface, showed that a drift of small debris was swirling by. Drowned insects should be in it. His eye discovered a bright bit up ahead. He swayed forward. His mouth opened, touched it, and it broke with a singing snap. More came floating toward him — little round stars. Some winked out. He let the others pass.

But here was what he liked, a mayfly. Earlier in the day the year's last swarm had left the river for their brief erotic life. Now their delicate spent bodies would be nourishment for the Trout. Many others came his way. After his hunger had been satisfied, he took one more, and shot it out of his mouth for the chance of catching it again, of biting it in two and tossing out and snapping up the pieces.

Now he was not shaped like a smooth wedge, for the cover of one gill was hanging loose, and his sides were ragged. And so his balance in the turns of the water was not perfect. His fins were spread, all needed to aid his sculling tail. Yet the fins were rippling with an easy motion, easy as a creature can be only when it feels that more of living is ahead.

The winter, when a trout is quiet, would be long enough for his wounds to heal, and for his nerves to sharpen. Soon the last migrating Osprey would be gone, but would come back. And otters might be hunting here. The Trout must learn the dangers of this flood, and learn to be wary even while he was exhilarated by it. He would. The wisdom of instinct, as of intelligence, can be disregarded, and it also can be drawn upon.

By the time he would be ready to try his strength once more against the river, the Snake would be a slapping, dodging, driving, wild spring torrent.

## QUESTIONS

1. Name the river to which the Trout escaped.
2. Find at least one illustration of appeal to each of the Trout's senses.
3. Mention some instincts motivating his actions. Which instinct was strongest?
4. What three dangers does the Trout face?
5. What characteristic twice endangers his life? What defenses does he have?
6. Find passages in which the description gains from its underwater point of view.

John Dos Passos

## The Two Ends of Pennsylvania Avenue

*John Dos Passos, a leading novelist who created a new style in American fiction with his *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) and *U.S.A.* (1937), has also written some highly perceptive travel books. His first books were novels based on his experiences as a volunteer in the Allied ambulance service, and with the U.S. Medical Corps, in World War I. His interest in Washington is reflected in his *District of Columbia* (1952) as well as the present "impressionistic but informative" selection. Of the future he once remarked: "I think there is enough real democracy in the mixed American tradition to enable us, with courage and luck, to weather the social transformations . . . without losing our liberties or . . . humane outlook."*

## I

Several men and a woman are sitting at breakfast along a yellow refectory table. Through the screened French doors, from the small garden laid out in the open spaces between dense trees, comes the smell of lilies trodden under the heavy sunlight, and the reedy note of a redbird from the linden.

One man is explaining: 'The first man he ought to see, if he wants to get an idea of what makes this town tick, is Joe.'

'Isn't Joe a pretty hard man to see?' asks a second man.

'Frank can fix that up. Frank had me on the phone for over half an hour before I was out of bed this morning telling me about his talk with Joe yesterday afternoon.'

From *State of the Nation* by John Dos Passos. Copyright 1943 and 1944 by John Dos Passos. Houghton Mifflin Company.

'When I had lunch with him last week,' a third man says, 'Martin told me Joe was going bigger than ever.'

'Eddy don't think so,' says the second man in a dogmatic tone.

'Well, why can't he talk to Eddy?'

'No use talking to Eddy,' the first man says emphatically. 'Eddy gets everything from Harold and it's six months since Harold knew anything he didn't read in the papers.'

'I thought Eddy and Harold were on the outs,' mutters the second man. The first man begins to laugh. Outside in the hall the phone is ringing. 'If you ask me,' the second man insists, 'Martin's the man for him to see if he wants straight talking. Martin's the brains of Harold's little combination, anyway.'

'Well, talking to Martin's just like talking to Don.' The third man insistently raises his voice to be heard above the phone that rings and rings.

'Where do you think Don gets his ideas? He sees Joe every night before he goes to bed.' The first man calls back over his shoulder as he sidles off to answer the telephone call.

'Now that that's settled, won't somebody have another cup of coffee?' soothingly suggests the smiling woman at the head of the table.

In the linden above the lilies the redbird keeps on singing.

## 2

### *The Power of the Word*

This taxidriver thought I was an Englishman. He spoke with a strong east of Europe accent himself. He'd hardly started the motor before he began to take me to task. 'Those sentimental prelates you have over in England are raising Cain about our knocking down the old churches. They ought to button up their mouths. That's sentimentality, if it ain't worse than that. We oughta bomb them Germans out of existence, wipe out everything they've got and then let 'em starve in their own ruins, men, women, and children, let 'em all starve.'

I found myself taking up the cudgels for the English prelate; for a moment I felt I was the English prelate trying to explain that if we were going truly to defeat Naziism and that sort of thing oughtn't we to behave as little like them as possible?

'That's appeasement talk,' he shouted back out of the corner of his mouth. 'They'd oughta shut up those imperialist appeasers. We'd oughta do to them like they'd do to us if they got a chance. Wipe 'em out.'

'What use would it be to lick them if we turned out just like them?'

'Anybody who says Americans are like Nazis is a goddam liar.'

'You're talking like a Nazi yourself.'

By the time he unloaded me in front of the House Office Building we were about ready to have it out on the pavement. It was only the stately nature of



the surroundings, the rhododendrons, the Capitol dome like an inflating balloon rearing its august architraves among circling pigeons behind the trees, the tall receding colonnades of the office buildings ranked in the sunlight, that kept us from slugging each other. I was so sore I hurried up the steps without giving him a tip.

### *The Congressional Mind*

Inside the House Office Building the cool staleness of the air under the high ceilings, and the courtesy of the whitehaired guard of whom I asked my way, restored my feeling of dignity as a fullfledged citizen of this republic that the taxidriver's yammering had ruffled. Thickness of marble walls shut out the heat and discord of the city. Walking down the tall corridor, I read the modestly lettered names of the representatives on the narrow darkstained doors of their offices, placed far apart along the soupgreen walls. At least in the physical setup of the buildings around the Capitol there was something left of republican simplicity. I found the door I was looking for, and was told by the pleasant-voiced young woman in the outer offices to go right on in; I was expected.

The freshman representative I'd come up to see was a livelylooking young man. His face didn't have that look of being trampled by crowds you see in seasoned politicians. He was a man who had done other things in his life than chew cigars in hotelroom conferences and breathe out platitudes on public platforms. He told me that he'd made the decision to run for Congress only because he honestly believed that, as he couldn't serve in the army, he ought to serve his country in some way at a time like this. He talked so plain about it that I believed him.

Well, here he was in Congress; how was he planning to go to work?

Before he answered that question, he said with a wry smile, he had to make some explanations: the first thing you came in contact with when you sat down in your office as a new arrival was the rigidity of the House organization. What went on on the floor was mere byplay that had very little to do with the real business of legislation. That went on in committees. The committees were in the hands of the Old Guard of both parties. A new man could be made effective or helpless by the men who nominated the committees. If he rubbed them the wrong way they could sponge his name off the slate. The House was an oligarchy of oldtimers who had arrived at their posts by seniority.

Many of these old men were honest old men who really wanted to do right, others were living up to political commitments they'd made years ago, some of them were . . . well, we'd better not go into that . . . but whoever they were, their real contacts with real people and things had been made fifteen or twenty years ago. We mustn't forget the time lag. Since then all they'd seen or known was Washington and their political machines back home. The routine business of their work, doing favors and necessary jobs for constituents, answering letters,

committee meetings, the hours spent on the floor, took up so much of their lives they didn't have leisure to read or study even if they wanted to. About all they could do was read the papers.

Most of them were lawyers. Lawschool or training in some county lawyer's office had already given their minds a verbal bent that made it hard for real events to get through. Life on the Hill fostered a feeling of selfimportance that hardened the shell on even the most receptive mind. And there weren't very many receptive minds in this typical enough collection of middleaged middling-income Americans. We were living in a time when changes came so fast it was hard on even the liveliest understanding. Only the most resilient and best-trained minds could keep up. Sometimes he doubted if any of us could. Why should we expect congressmen to think quicker than their constituents? He hadn't been there long but, gosh, he'd come to the conclusion that under the circumstances it was surprising that the House did as well as it did.

Suppose you had something definite you really wanted to get accomplished, how would you go about it?

The first problem was to get yourself on the right committee, or to get some senior member to take up your bill . . . Suddenly he paused and gave a startled look around the office as if he expected to see somebody hiding behind the calfskin bindings in his bookcase. Now if he talked freely I must please not quote him by name or identify him in any way. His voice dropped to a whisper. Talking out of turn by a newcomer was the best way to get in wrong. If he got in wrong right at the start he might just as well have stayed home and made himself a pot of money at his business. Had I ever noticed how few men of prominence in other walks of life had ever made effective congressmen? The problem was to use what brains you had without letting your colleagues know you had any. I wasn't to think that the freshmen of this congress weren't putting their heads together trying to dope out some way of making themselves felt. They were. Their problem cut right across party lines. Most of the new Democrats and new Republicans were not professional politicians, but men like himself who'd let themselves be sent to Washington because they thought they might use their brains or their experience to some good purpose there. And they were all up against the same stone wall: seniority.

Did they have any definite plan?

There'd been agreement on some details. One thing they'd decided was that congressional committees needed more expert advice, congressmen needed expert secretaries who would really be able to give accurate information about questions that came up.

Did he mean a brain trust?

Sure; set a brain trust to catch a brain trust. He laughed. He went on to explain that he meant there ought to be more information work of the sort some of the Senate committees were doing. Congress so far this session had been

a bull in a china shop. It had done a pretty good job tearing down the New Deal wing of the Administration. The question was: could it be gotten back to constructive work?

What kind of constructive work? What kind of thing had he hoped to accomplish when he packed his grip to come to Washington?

'My . . . my . . . That sure is the sixtyfour dollar question,' he said, pursing up his lips. 'There are so many things it's hard to put into words.'

A bell like a schoolbell rang through the building. It was twelve o'clock, time for the House to convene. We got to our feet. 'Whew, that lets me out,' he said laughing. 'I've got to get on the floor.' He held out his hand. 'Well, this has been very interesting.' He shook my hand vigorously. 'I'm glad I don't have to answer that one.' We were both laughing.

### *The House in Session*

Dawdling a little so as to let the congressman get ahead of me I followed him down the corridor and out of the building into a stream of men in twos and threes and fours who were walking slowly so as not to get too hot in the blaze of noonday heat as they crossed the street and rounded the edge of the curved pavement towards the House wing of the Capitol. It was so hot that sparrows hopping around in the grass had their bills open as if they were gasping. In the shade of the stone arches under the steps it was cool again. Under the vault dimly lit by dim electric light bulbs there was a press of people that gave a little of the feeling of a theatre lobby just after the curtain has gone up. Down a corridor I found a small lunchroom and sat up on a stool and ordered a glass of buttermilk and a sandwich.

Beside me sat two tall men in stetson hats, undoubtedly Texans. 'Now, look here,' one of them was drawling in the other's ear. 'I'm agoin' to get Dick to come out and visit with us in the lobby and I want you to talk to him good. He's goin' out on that floor and make a speech against meat prices this afternoon, and I want him to feel he's got some stockmen behind him. You tell him the truth about the price of feed. Half these politicians round here don't know the hind end of a steer from a taxicab.' They slipped off their stools and moved off with toothpicks in the corners of their mouths.

Swallowing the last of my buttermilk, I climbed the broad stairway. As I went I craned my neck to look up at the painting named 'Westward the Course of Empire' that used to send a chill down my spine when I saw it as a child. The stairway was full of soldiers and sailors on leave rambling around taking in the sights of the Capitol. On the upper landing a guide had marshalled quite a flock of them along with a few schoolteachers on vacation and some young girls and small children, and was about to lead them into the gallery for a glimpse of the proceedings. While they filed past the guard I walked over to look out of a window that opened on gray architecture and blue sky and the leafy gardens

of the Hill and the avenues crowded with cars at its foot. A wedgeshaped formation of planes made up of three threes was passing so far away as to be tiny specks in front of the streaked white clouds that hung over the irregular rim of buildings across the horizon. I went back to let myself be frisked for weapons by the elderly and genial guard before being let into a seat in the gallery to see for myself what the House was up to.

The appearance of the hall had changed since I'd last seen it years ago. The desks and the red carpet had gone and instead there were semicircular benches with high backs freshly upholstered in blueish gray. The steel girders painted olivegreen that were put in to hold up the glass ceiling when it was condemned as unsafe gave the whole place a temporary and transitional look. The representatives themselves had a more citified air than I remembered. They moved about more than they used to. The noise of the desks was gone, but there was a great babble of conversation. In spite of the public address system and the portable mike that some of the members hung round their necks when they spoke it was hard to follow what was said from the gallery.

I found myself sitting in the front row between a strange character with a long not too clean face tanned by the open and long slatecolored hair loose over his collar, who looked like a medicine show Indian or a professional hermit, and a young corporal with blond hair cut in a brush and a turned-up nose who kept asking me who this man was and that man was. We were right opposite the bare bulbous head of the Speaker who sat looking straight in front of him with an expressionless face as solemn as a hound dog's.

A gentleman from Montana was addressing the House in opposition to a federal scheme to build a dam to store water for the Columbia River hydroelectric project which he said would ruin one of the grandest and most beautiful and productive valleys in the whole state and that just for the benefit of another state. A gentleman from Maine rose to congratulate the House on the reporting out of committee of a resolution stating that the House was in favor of having a foreign policy. He got a round of applause when he said that this resolution did not in his opinion mean a conspiracy of the starryeyed to elevate the wages of the tin miners of Bolivia or the living standards of the banana growers of Nicaragua. A gentleman from New York spoke in defense of the Administration's rationing plans and in favor of subsidies for food producers. A gentleman with a rich South Carolina accent came out in favor of price control all down the line and of the elimination of unnecessary middlemen between producer and consumer.

From the gallery it was hard to trace any continuity in the arguments. Speech stood up after speech like peaks out of a mountain range drowned in mist. It took considerable effort to imagine what kind of ridges joined them together. Nothing seemed to gear into anything else. The speeches were good, wellphrased and welldelivered; during this particular segment of an afternoon

they seemed the sincere opinions of sincere men, but the end result of the orderly and goodtempered proceedings was a sense of stagnation. It was hard to connect the voices with the faces or backs of the speakers. Voices tended to lose themselves in a vague babble. Irresistible drowsiness was stealing over me. I came to from a catnap with a start for fear the guard had seen me nodding and would come down to throw me out. Sleeping, reading, writing, and demonstrative behavior are forbidden in the galleries of Congress. After that I sat up straight and practiced deep breathing and tried to look as if I'd been awake all along.

The corporal and the hermit had gone and their places had been taken by two countryclubby looking men in light tweeds. Down in the House a slender cool looking lady, with a finely cut profile and her hair in a pompadour, was talking. She was pointing out that for many years this nation had had no foreign policy, that we still had no foreign policy in spite of having been at war for eighteen months. She suggested that the basis for a foreign policy should be a military alliance with the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The House listened with a good deal of attention. It was a good speech, delivered in a crisp rather superior tone of voice. Whether you agreed with it or not it contained concise and definite statements that could be used as the basis of an argument. The galleries listened with rapt attention. The gallery sitters seemed to have the feeling that this speech was an occasion. Their sense of importance was heightened by being present in person at an event that would be headlines in the newspapers. This cool looking lady was a celebrity. Down on the benches the younger Republicans seemed pleased. But looking down on the grizzled heads and tweed shoulders of the oldtimers seated below me I imagined I could see the hackles rise on many a congressman's neck.

The speech ended in a general discussion of the Administration's foreign policy. A gentleman from Texas began the rebuttal by laying a smoke screen of official doubletalk over the argument. He made an effort to turn the whole thing into the good clean fun of a mock battle between Democrats and Republicans. There were tart references to the clever gentlewoman's newness in these surroundings and to her beautiful and devastating phrasing. The gentlewoman received a dignified spanking for bothering her pretty little head about such abstruse matters, but nobody answered the pert question she put to the distinguished member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs when she asked him to describe clearly and simply in what was left to him of a five minute period the foreign policy of the President of the United States.

When the argument suddenly merged into a discussion of the affairs of the unhappy island of Porto Rico, I felt all at once I'd been sitting there long enough and threaded my way up over the seats through what was only a scattered handful of listeners out of the gallery. At the door I noticed that the elderly doorkeeper was arguing with a creamyfaced page boy. I stopped beside them for a moment to listen.

The page thought the speech was wonderful. He thought the gentlewoman was wonderful. 'She said things a guy could understand,' he kept saying. 'Now why can't we go over there to say to the British how about it? just like she said.'

The doorkeeper shook his head sourly. 'She'll never get away with that sort of thing, not in this House,' he was saying. 'When you been around here as long as I have you'll know more about this sort of thing. You watch, they'll nip her right in the bud. You can't come out and say things like that.'

'But that's what's so wonderful. Nobody ever does.' The page's voice broke.

'Things don't work that way.'

'But they ought to,' whined the page, almost tearful.

'Well,' said the doorkeeper in a sententious drawl, 'she had the pleasure of hearing herself talk. If you ask me, that's all she's going to get out of it.'

## 3

*Investigating Committee*

This is a small committee room in the Senate Office Building divided into an inner and outer office by a row of bookcases masked by green silk curtains. There's a large desk in the back and two small ones facing each other in the outer part. There's nothing else in the room but chairs. The electric light is overhead and mixes wanly with the daylight coming in through the tall windows. I've been sitting there a long time beside the reception girl, across from a keenlooking young man with a long nose working at the opposite desk waiting for the Secretary to come back from a hearing. The stale airconditioning gives me a feeling of being cut off from the world like the feeling I used to have as a child kept in after school. The girl is carrying on a whispered telephone conversation about going out in the country with a girlfriend on Saturday. When I begin to stir uneasily in my chair the young man at the desk gets to his feet and suggests that as the Secretary is late maybe he'd better pitch in. He begins to tell me about the committee's work.

One thing that has been kept in mind, he says, is the experience of the Committee on the Conduct of the War during the Civil War. These congressmen drove the commanders in the field almost crazy, they had their fingers in every pie and balled things up generally. 'Strategy and tactics we keep away from. The aim of the committee has been to keep Congress informed on the efficiency of war production. Our business is to be a spotlight, not to recommend legislation. Our reports are for information. Our real weapon is publicity.'

I had begun to bring up the point that maybe through such committees Congress was developing new and valuable tentacles with which it could deal with real happenings and real people.

Before the young man could answer the Secretary himself, a husky tall lightskinned man with short sandy hair and a downright manner, hurried in and took me over.

'We started to work more than six months before Pearl Harbor to try to find out what was being done about national defence. We started by calling in the heads of departments to testify and then we worked through procurement officers and businessmen right back into the factories where the stuff is produced. We've plugged along the same line ever since. We want to know what's being done, how well it's being done, and whether it's being done efficiently. If money and time are being wasted, why are they being wasted? To save money and time ourselves we take a subcommittee to the scene of the investigation instead of the old method of bringing the witnesses to Washington. Everything we've accomplished has been by publicity. If we say out loud that the building of army camps and cantonments was wretchedly planned at first and that more than two hundred and fifty million dollars were wasted right off the bat, then that makes the War Department more careful next time. We've done more by the mistakes we've averted than by what we've actually accomplished in uncovering fraud and incompetence.'

I brought up my theory about the new organs Congress needed to keep its end up in the face of the giant proliferation of the executive branch. He said maybe this was one of them. At any rate this committee had developed an effective method for getting at facts. Facts in this town were pretty goddam scarce. A fact had a hard time staying alive in a political atmosphere.

Once you had the facts, how could you put them to work?

Well, some things had happened in that direction. Long ago the committee had uncovered the fact that seventy percent of war production was in the hands of great corporations and that the procurement officers just naturally felt safer dealing with them than dealing with the small fellows. The tendency of all the regulations was to make things hard for the small independent manufacturer and easy for the great corporation. Recommendations of the committee had had, he thought, a good deal of influence in getting the facilities of the smaller plants used.

Wasn't small business cooked, anyway? Wouldn't that brave new world after the war the advertisers tell us about, be entirely in the hands of great cartels?

There certainly had been a very definite trend that way, he admitted. But he didn't think that small business need give up hope yet. The committee was trying to foster the idea that after the war there could be room for all kinds of interests, big, little, and middling, if businessmen would only keep the national interest separate from their own interests in their minds and learn to put it first.

'Honestly,' I asked him, 'do you yourself think there's any hope for small business after the war?'

He gave me a sharp steely questioning look and his face went blank. 'A good doctor never gives up hope till the undertaker comes . . . A good deal of it depends on who our Doctor Schacht is in this country.'

'Well, who is our Doctor Schacht?'

He gave a short harsh laugh. 'Well, you'll just have to find out for yourself, Mister. You just stick around Capitol Hill.' I studied my notebook for a while. He started rattling with his pencil on the edge of his desk.

'National interest means the needs of the individuals who make up the three great segments of the population — labor, farming and business — doesn't it?'

'That's one way of putting it,' he said, yawning dreamily. I began to feel I'd been taking up too much of his time.

### *Cassandra Speaks*

Down the hall I went to call on a Senator I knew. I told him I'd been talking about cartels. 'Cartels,' he shouted, staring in front of him as if at some invisible and ghastly scene of carnage across the room. 'They are sweeping everything before them. Our society is headed towards monopoly, restraint of competition, enforced scarcity on a vast scale . . . And will the Administration take any measures to stop it? I have most regretfully come to the conclusion that the answer is, No, it will not.'

He looked at his wristwatch and suggested that I come down in the elevator with him. The Senate was convening at eleven. This was going to be a busy day. 'One more stage in the reaction,' he said mysteriously. 'The passing of the anti-strike bill over the veto is on the cards for today.'

The elevator, run by a man in a wellpressed light gray suit, who had a carnation in his buttonhole, took us down to the basement. When we stepped out, my friend pressed a pushbutton in the wall opposite, marked in large letters 'Senators Only,' and we walked around through a curving plaster tunnel to the little monorail car, with its superannuated toyshop air of something thought up by Jules Verne and exhibited as the hope of the future at the St. Louis World's Fair, which trundles the Senators through a short tunnel to the Senate elevator. 'I gather, Senator, that you're pessimistic about cartels?' I mumbled, as I settled down in the little car beside him. 'Yes, sir, I am pessimistic. It is a very terrible thing to see everything we have fought for all these years going to ruin and destruction. Let me tell you that there are still some men who have not given up the battle. I have been defending the cause of the people against the cause of monopoly year after year. I intend to go on defending it. The fight's not over yet.'

The car came smoothly to a stop. We nodded to the ancient mechanic in a blue uniform and made for the elevator. The elevator was packed with Senators. There were greetings and introductions. When we got out at the floor level the Senator cornered a small pageboy. 'Son,' he said to him with a flourish, 'this gentleman is a very particular friend of mine. I want you to take him up in the gallery and to place him in a seat away from any of these pillars or obstructions, a seat from which he can have a full view of everything that takes place.'



*The Hill Becomes Volcanic*

Though the girders supporting the ceiling give the Senate Chamber the same look of transition the House has, the old desks are still there, and it has less the air of having been in the hands of an interior decorator. The Senate Chamber seems lighter and the figures of the Senators loom larger than do the crowded congressmen in the House. This particular morning the Senators have an easy and well-slept look in their light clothes. They look like men who have enjoyed good solid leisurely breakfasts. The clerk is calling the roll. Senators are coming in, in twos and threes, stopping in the aisles to exchange a few words or stooping to lean over the back of a seated colleague; they form small knots in the rear and to the sides of the presiding officer's rostrum, nod heads over papers and scatter again. There's a good deal of stretching and slow moving around. They move rather ponderously as if they had difficulty in lifting their feet off the carpet. You are reminded of groups of bears on a fine morning in the bearpit at a zoo.

The proceedings gather momentum as the morning dribbles away. Communications are recorded or laid on the table. The Senator from Virginia announces ceremonies to commemorate the Jefferson Bicentennial in Charlottesville the coming fourth of July. The address he has prepared is included in the record, but, thank God, not read. Gradually a full dress debate is getting started on the perennial subject of subsidies to food producers. There's great opposition to the Administration. The clerk reads an amendment cutting subsidies out from the pending bill. An amendment is offered to the amendment and an amendment to that amendment. It becomes obvious that strong feelings are stirring behind these gentlemen's ponderous courtesies.

A letter from the Secretary of Commerce defending the Administration's subsidy program is introduced into the record. Suddenly the Senator from Missouri is on his feet. He has a paper in his hand. He is complaining that one of these letters was placed on his desk while he had stepped out of the Chamber for a moment. 'It was not even folded.' There was a quiver of irritation in his voice. 'Mr. President, I say that that is an exhibition of indecent lobbying by the Secretary of Commerce . . . I say that the Secretary of Commerce sat out there in the lobby yesterday afternoon, conferring with Senators as they passed by to try to raise some doubt in the mind of someone, any doubt in the mind of anyone, as to the wisdom of the course the Senate was about to pursue . . . Mr. President, I say that I think this is an indecent practice. I think it is a practice forbidden by law. In all truth and candor I think this is a practice for which the Secretary could fairly be impeached by the House of Representatives, and if he were impeached I should vote to convict him . . .'

The Senator from Texas shakes his white ducktails and lifts up his voice in defence of the Secretary of Commerce. The Senator from Alabama agrees

with him. The Senator from Colorado announces that it was he who asked to have the offending letter sent purely for information and who introduced it into the record. The Senator from Missouri says he never asked for such a letter. He takes the still unfolded paper off his desk and shakes it. He goes on that everybody must have seen the Secretary of Commerce sitting there on a couch all yesterday afternoon. There had been no secret about it. The Secretary is a large man. 'Anybody can see him with the naked eye. It is not necessary to put on glasses to see him as you pass by. So as I saw him out there buttonholing Senators, whispering in their ears, I knew exactly what he was doing . . .'

The Senator from Alabama tries to spread oil and balm. He is delighted, he says, that the Senator from Missouri says the Secretary is a large man. He himself considers the Secretary a large man in many ways. He hopes that is what the Senator has in mind when he uses the adjective 'large.' He adds that there had been a luncheon yesterday in an office up here in the Capitol and that the Secretary had been invited, but that little of the conversation had been on the subject of subsidies. Another Senator injects a little ruefully the remark that he hadn't gotten in on the lunch, but says he considers that the Secretary's behavior has been perfectly proper.

The Senator from Alabama returns to the defence of the Secretary of Commerce. At a time when there has been so much complaint against the bureaus and agencies at the other end of the Avenue, that they didn't cooperate with Congress, he thought the Secretary of Commerce was much to be commended for his attitude towards Congress.

The debate got back into the groove of the amendments. Senators were drifting away from their seats. It was lunch time.

While I waited for a Senator who had asked me to lunch, I sat in the dark lobby on the lower floor under the crawling design of ornate red and gilt arabesques on the vault, against which the faces of presentday American politicians, lobbyists, newspapermen, visitors, and our clothes and our manners, looked strangely incongruous.

Did the man I'd been talking to that morning mean that Jesse Jones was the Doctor Schacht of the regime? I was asking myself. He'd dug the New Deal's grave all right, was he doing the same job for small business? And wasn't it democracy's grave they were all digging? Was there any use in finding the criminal, dragging out the scapegoat? The Greco-Roman stage setting of the Capitol was filling my mind, as it was intended to by its designers, with notions out of ancient history. Cicero thought he had saved selfgovernment in Rome when he got rid of Catiline; all he did was to prepare the way for Caesar.

The Senator who had asked me to lunch was already standing in the arched entrance waiting for me. He looked much younger than his age, with his round glasses and his shortcut hair and his student's manner. We walked down the stairs to the diningroom in the basement.

The Senate diningroom, with its white starched napkins and tablecloths and its elderly colored waiters in white coats, still has that oldfashioned New World air that is so pleasant around the Capitol. There's something plain and dignified and selfrespecting in the manners of the guards and of the elevator men and of the rambling citizens roaming around the building, looking at the pictures and statues and eating in the public sections of the lunchrooms, something that goes with the sense of civic dignity and spaciousness scaled to the human figure, that the architects tried to impart to the dome and the colonnades and the crude painfully worked and earnestly stiff carving on the old part of the building. It's pleasant to sit in the Senate diningroom. It makes you feel like an American of two generations ago, when all the institutions and hopes that seem so precarious now, were still among the unchangeable verities. The food is plain and good, oldtime American dishes. It reminds you of the food you used to get in station restaurants as a child in the early years of the century when there still was such a thing as distinctive American cookery.

As we ate we talked about the drifting eddy of cross purposes Washington became when the New Deal collapsed. It hardly seemed possible, we were saying, that our immense production for war could be directed from here. And yet somewhere in the welter of frustration, recrimination, interdepartmental politics, useful decisions were being made and carried out. Some way or other the stuff was being produced and taken where it was needed. To accomplish that miracle, the nation's energy was draining off into war. There just wasn't the energy left for anything else.

The trouble was that you couldn't divide the war from the nation. Successful waging of the war depended on health at home. This was the afternoon when the mine strike situation would come to a head. The President was going to return the antistrike bill with a veto. Congress probably would pass it over the veto. What would that do to national unity? None of this, the Senator said, need have happened if the Administration had retained the momentum of the old New Deal days. Whichever way the vote went, the Senator said, all he could see ahead was rifts and more rifts.

After lunch I sat in another arabesque lobby at the other end of the building, talking with another Senator, a Southerner this time. I was asking him if he didn't feel that the Administration, while conducting the war, so most people admitted, very well, was losing touch with the folks back home. This was a mighty confusing time, he said. Some days he felt dismayed, and some days he didn't feel so bad. This coal strike business was mighty bad. Ought never to have been allowed to happen. Never would have happened if the President had been properly advised about it. He didn't feel they knew at the White House how intense the feeling through the country was against labor. Keeping in touch with your constituents was the most important thing in the world. He himself, he said, made it a point to spend a few days every month down in his home

state. A feller had to trim his fences. They would have the hide off him down there in no time if he didn't. Why, he even prepared recorded addresses to be broadcast once a week from a local radio station. This was no time to take any chances.

I had still another Senator to look up, and was waiting for him in the little niche right off the entrance to the Senate floor when he blundered out through the door. At first he didn't recognize me when I spoke to him. He shook his head as if to bring his eyes into focus. I must forgive him, he said. He was extremely agitated. His head was spinning. He was very confused. He'd have to put off our conversation because the President's veto message had just come and he must return to the floor immediately.

He bolted back into the Chamber and I ran up the stairs to the visitors' gallery. There was considerable briskness in the usually lackadaisical air of the corridors. The old man who opened my coat to look for weapons had a pleased inscrutable look like the look of the boxoffice girl on opening night when the show begins to look like a hit. The gallery was crowded. By great good luck I managed to get into a corner seat that was not behind a post. Young men, old men, welldressed women, girl secretaries, heavyfeatured lobbyists were sitting on the edges of their seats. The press gallery was full. An unusually large number of Senators were sitting in stiff attitudes of attention at their desks on the floor below.

The Senator from Texas stood well back in the middle of the Chamber, his white head tilted on his shoulders so that the long wisps of hair were ground into his collar. His jaw was thrust out, his mouth tight closed so that the curved lines that joined the flanges of his nose to the turned down corners of his mouth were deeply accentuated. He was asking the presiding officer that the President's message might be laid before the Senate. The Senator from Alabama asked the Senator from Texas to yield, so that he might suggest the absence of a quorum.

While the roll was being called, the tension mounted. Men answered to their names sharply and with an air of decision. They sat stiffly in their seats. Their voices were tense. It was like the roll call in a company of soldiers about to move up to the front. They were in for it now. They'd made the decisions that would end or make many a man's political career. Labor and antilabor were both forces that had long organized memories. The vote that many a man was going to cast would mean reelection or defeat.

A quorum was announced. The Chair laid before the Senate the message from the President vetoing the antistrike bill. When the veto message had been read, the presiding officer put the question:

'Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding?'

It was the big moment for the Senator from Texas.

'Mr. President,' his voice had a low bellow to it like a bull heard in the dis-

tance. 'I am sorely disappointed. The Senate is sorely disappointed. The House, I am sure, is sorely disappointed. The people of the United States are sorely disappointed. Every sailor and soldier on the seas and on the land and in the air is sorely disappointed . . . The President has a right under the Constitution to veto a bill, and the Senate has a right to pass a bill over the President's veto. I hope the Senate will exercise its high constitutional privilege.' There was applause. Voices broke out. In the gallery there was an occasional handclap and stirring and scuffling of feet.

The Senator from New Mexico was joining his voice to that of the Senator from Texas. The Senator from Wisconsin made a point of order that the Senate was not in order.

The gavel rapped. There was no need for motions, the question came up automatically under the Constitution. The roll was called. Fiftysix voted yea, twentyfive voted nay, fifteen abstained from voting, and there were a number of absences.

By this time the Vice President was in the chair. In an expressionless resonant voice he announced: 'On this question, more than twothirds of the Senate having voted in the affirmative, the bill on reconsideration is passed, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding.'

Something snapped like a rubber band stretched too tight. The galleries were as full of stir of people leaving as the bleachers in the last inning of a dull baseball game. On the floor Senators were slumping back in their seats like rowers at the end of a race. In the crowd of civilians and men in uniform pouring down the stairway from the gallery there was a feeling of exultation. They'd seen the home team score against the visiting team from the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. Most of them seemed to feel it was their home team that had won.

#### 4

#### *The Land of Plenty*

In the hotel palmgarden music shrills above a din of tongues like the racket of an aviary in the zoo. The air smells of rolls and sizzling butter and cocktails and cigarette smoke. Packed in beside a little wicker table between other tables, all crowded with rattling groups of dressedup men and women, my friend and I have to talk loud to hear each other above the racket.

'Who is the man whose historic function, as the Marxists call it, corresponds to Doctor Schacht's in Germany?' I am asking.

'You're always asking about personalities,' he complains. 'Personality is only important when it's relevant to the machinery.'

'But in the long run how the job is done depends on what the man is like.'

'How about saying that the job makes the man? The job of supply for the army is getting done all right. The army at least has men in this town who know

how to get it done. Their job is seeing that we get places fastest with the mostest men and equipment, and they are doing it.'

'But on the way the job is done depends the shape our society will have after it's over?'

'You mean that as they do the job they ought to remember it takes wealth to create the money they are spending?'

'And that if the history of the United States has proved anything it has proved that liberty creates wealth . . . I mean,' I said, shouting above the din, 'the turnover to war is reshaping the nation.'

'They don't know about things like that in the army. They've got to get things done. What we have is some extremely efficient organizers on a short term basis. They know how to get the most money out of Congress and they know where to spend it.'

'That means they can't help building up big business.'

'Sure . . . They are no more worried about where the money comes from or the future liberties of the average citizen than the hunters on the great plains were worried about where the buffalo came from . . . They were brought up to think of this as the land of plenty.'

### *Plans*

This flyer couldn't have been more than twentyfour years old. He was a thin, seriousfaced young man. He'd just gotten over a bout of fever he'd picked up on a Pacific island. Yes, he said, he found trying to get settled in a place like this was pretty complicated. Maybe it was because he was going to get married soon, but all the details of life did seem more complicated to him than they used to when he used to wish he was home out there in the theatres . . . Out there they all wanted to find things at home just like they'd left them. They liked the country the way it was. That was one reason they were so sore at labor, they felt laborleaders were trying to change things. Did that make any sense? . . . One thing really had surprised him since he'd been home. That was how little people talked or thought about what was going to happen after the war. In New Guinea there'd been all kinds of discussion groups. There'd been great enthusiasm for this sort of discussion. They had let in the enlisted men because they showed so much interest in what the plans were for after the war. Their attitude was they didn't want any changes made till they got home. They all wanted to have a hand in things. But here in Washington nobody seemed to feel that way. It was natural that around the office where the work was so pressing and interesting, most of the talk would be shop but it was really surprising to many of the fellows coming back from the theatres, or at least to some of those he knew — one man's experience was pretty limited you know — to find so little excitement at home about plans for after the war.

*Practical Man*

In the anteroom an elderly man with a hammer under his arm was standing in front of the receptionist's desk holding out a large framed photograph, taken from the air, of the dark land of Kiska between shining sea and mist, and of transports and destroyers in formation headed towards the island. The receptionist was telling him he couldn't hang it now, there was someone in there. If he'd lend her his hammer, she would hang it herself later. 'I'd never get it back,' he said, shaking his head. 'I'll come back later.' He leaned over and stood the big photograph carefully up against the wall.

When whoever was in there left, I was ushered into a large bright office, where the man I had come to see sat with his back to a broad window open on the Potomac and the white buildings among green trees across the river and the broad morning sky above. He had a round light head and a large pale rather irregular face. When I said something about his being pretty busy, he smiled and said, 'Well, not so busy as last year. Then, we were in a jam getting all this started. Now, the team is in the field. For better or for worse, the training program is launched. Then, we didn't have anything. We had to make everything up as we went along.'

'What kind of a country are we going to have after the war?' I asked him.

The question didn't seem to faze him.

'A great country,' he answered smiling. 'Two things have surprised me in the course of this work. One has been discovering the deep traditional selfless patriotism of the old line army men . . . I always knew it was there but I never knew how deep it went before . . . And the other was the discovery that we have military brains in this country. We hadn't shown any particular sign of them since the Civil War. I suppose we didn't have any use for them . . . That's why I don't feel too discouraged when people go around hanging crepe about how we'll never solve the postwar problems. Well, we found the brains for the army when we needed them. Maybe when it becomes absolutely necessary we'll find the brains for the postwar problems too.'

## 5

*The Architecture of the White House*

I met my friend at the corner of Lafayette Square. We drove out in his car to his place across the Potomac. He wanted to do some work on his garden. While we hoed the hard red dirt between the rows of corn and beans, I got to asking him what it was like in the White House these days. At first, he didn't say anything. I was afraid he wasn't going to talk. Washington officials don't much like to talk to outsiders whether they are friends or not. When he reached the end of his row, he leaned on his hoe and said:

'Well, you know, there's always that feeling of dignified calm. It comes from

the architecture, light pouring in through tall windows off green lawns shaded by big trees; it always seems quiet and serene there as if nothing outside mattered.'

'That's Jefferson again, the influence of Monticello.'

We got off our subject talking about the stately setting for the young republic that Jefferson had imagined more completely than any other man. You felt it in the Capitol, you felt it in the Treasury, you felt a last distortion of it even in the pompous burlesque of a Greco-Roman style of the Hoover period buildings along Constitution Avenue. But most of all you felt it at the White House. His design for the building was rejected, but Jefferson did more than any other man to launch the style in which the building was finally built, a style that expressed an aristocratic kind of pride in republican simplicity.

As we talked and hoed every now and then a plane passing low overhead drowned out our words. The hot blue air over the Potomac valley was full of planes. As they banked in the distance they glinted like minnows in a brook.

'I wonder how much that feeling influences the occupants?'

'It does,' my friend said. 'I believe it does.'

Then I brought out the question that had been in the back of my head all morning:

'Does that help to keep the President out of touch with the country?'

'Is he? I wonder. It isn't like it was before his old private secretary got sick. She was an extraordinary woman. She had a knack of keeping the human side of things uppermost . . . something about the way she arranged the papers to go on his desk . . . she was pretty conscious that he needed to have the channels kept open for him so that he should be in touch with what real people did and thought and felt. It's not like that now.'

Hoeing made us run water like fountains. Gradually we stripped off our clothes as we worked, until we were working in bathingtrunks. The sun was so hot it made your ears hum and red spots swim before your eyes. The clay was red and hard, but out of it corn, beans, broccoli, lettuce, peas grew strong in astonishingly rich and varied greens.

'Do you have a feeling that the whole place is under a bellglass? I mean the White House.'

My friend didn't answer. We set the hose so that it would sprinkle the lawn and went into the house for showers. While we were dressing slowly in front of a fan so as not to start sweating again, I asked him whether the quality — intellectual, moral, put it any way — well, whether the human quality of the people who went in and out of the White House hadn't deteriorated in the last few years. Outside of the army and navy, outside of purely war matters he thought perhaps it had. We mustn't forget how much of the country's best energy had gone into the war.

A certain restraint was growing up between us. I rephrased my question, but he wouldn't rise to it any more.



We decided we'd better go out to have a glass of beer and a sandwich. Along the main road, by this time pretty well sprinkled with cars, there were a number of white and glass fancyroofed luncheon places. Every one of them was packed to the doors with citizens sweating in clean Sunday shirtsleeves, and their families, and service men in light uniforms, and girls in pale colored dresses. At last we came to one that advertised curb service. We stood in the shade of its awning facing a little teasing breeze until we could waylay a little girl hurrying a tray of beerbottles and glasses out to an old sedan packed with the squirming and screeching and wisecracks of a bunch of sailors and their girls. We induced her to treat us as if we were a car and to bring us out a tray. As we stood there munching and drinking, the great graygreen bombers kept passing overhead. It was like being under a bridge on a main road full of traffic. Across the back lots we could see the civilian transports circling to land at the airfield. My friend made a vague gesture with his hand. 'That's where the big swells land. They come in by bomber from . . . from everywhere . . . and hurry right to the White House.'

### *Close to the President*

It was late afternoon. The man I had come to call on in his comfortable apartment overlooking the Avenue greeted me in his bathrobe, apologizing for it with the explanation that he couldn't keep his clothes on, it was so damn hot. Coppery clouds were building up over Georgetown, giving a reddish glow, as if it were heated from within, to the asphalt of the street. He handed me a dripping glass of beer. 'I had to bring this in on my back. You can't get anything delivered,' he said, and we started chatting about the District. Did I know that the old gentleman who ran the brewery was still alive? He was over a hundred. A living advertisement for his product and for the healthiness of the city. Maybe people complained about the Washington weather too much. If people lived to be a hundred it couldn't be too bad.

Did this man, who was what is known in the press as 'close to the White House,' feel, I asked, that the war had cut the President off from the country? 'Every time he takes a trip,' he answered, a little aggressively, 'he comes back very much refreshed. Maybe he's a little like the Greek mythical giant who lost his strength as soon as he ceased to touch the earth . . . I think he's quite conscious of the importance of keeping that touch.'

'Can he do it? Can he get away from official channels enough to do it?'

'Well, he still sees his old friends . . . all sorts of people turn up who have no connection with politics or business of any kind — family friends, legal friends from New York, casual acquaintances. He can't give them quite as much time as he used to. But he certainly sees them. Some people feel that he gives them too much time . . .'

'It must be hard for the man in the White House to keep in touch, though.

It's so much easier for people to tell him what he wants to hear. I should think the longer he stayed there, the harder it would be for anybody to tell him any bad news.'

'That would be true of an ordinary man. A man has naturally to be a genius at that kind of thing. I think this man is . . . How about another glass? A bird can't fly on one wing, you know.'

### *Press Conference*

About the only change war has brought to the procedure when you go to the President's press conference is that the secret service men have to find your name on a list at the gate before they let you walk across the drive to the entrance in the West Wing. If you are not a regular attendant, you are ushered into the long panelled room filled up by the great mahogany table Aguinaldo gave. You sit there remembering the bronze general on his rearing horse taking off his hat to all of us whom you walked past as you came and the sailors talking to girls on the benches of Lafayette Square, and the pigeons drinking at the drinking fountains, lifting their pink bills and puffing out their rainbowcolored breasts and stretching their necks to let the cool water run down their gullets; remembering the stately simplicity of the main porch of the White House, the spacing of the trees, the box bushes in tubs you got a glimpse of as you passed, the Augustan afterglow in the style of ornament of the portal you came in by. It's still the sort of thing Jefferson meant. In this long room you are sitting in, the panelling has a certain dignity; there's a hellenic reminder in the dentated corning. The minutes pass. You sit on a red couch, one of a row of men you don't know. From the hallway outside comes a faint babble from the regular newspapermen in the hall. You go over your notes. You jot down appointments, you try to remember your expenses, that taxicab, the check at dinner. The minutes drag on.

All at once the newspapermen are pouring down the hall. A suave tall gentleman in a cutaway has his arm across the door. As the crowd thins, he lets it drop. We come in at the tail end of the procession into the oval bluegray office. The brownish velvet curtains are new. The pictures of boats are the same, the flag and the eagle. Across the shoulders, past the ears of the newspapermen who got there ahead of you, you look down on the President of the United States seated at his desk.

On either side behind his chair stand secret service men. One of them is a burly middleaged man with a red beefy face, the other is a squarejawed expressionless young man who might be a floorwalker in a department store. Beyond you can see the green lawn sloping down the hill to the great enclosing trees. Lustrous in the crosslights behind the President's head, stands a large globe of the world. It is against the blue Pacific Ocean that you see his head uptilted.

As always he's handsomer when you see him face to face, than he appears

in his photographs. He hasn't changed so much since I saw him seven years ago in the early days of greensickness and accomplishment of the New Deal. His hair is grayer. He still has the fine nose and forehead, the gray eyes blandly unabashed under the movable eyebrows. Looking down from this angle you don't notice the broad stump speaker's mouth, the heavy jowl.

Today he looks well rested. He's in high good humor. At breakfast they brought him the news of the capture of an island. The reporters shoot questions up over each other's shoulders. So long as it's on the foreign wars it's fun. His manner is boyishly gay. He shoots the answers back with zest, blowing out his cheeks the way he does when searching for a word, lifting his eyebrows to make the questioner feel he has all his attention, man to man, for a moment; cosily scratching an ear or the back of his head as he formulates one of his sparkling improvisations. The boys are being made to feel at home in the headmaster's study.

It's only when rationing, the coal strike, price control, come up that a frown appears on his forehead. He begins to talk about deep water. His manner becomes abrupt. A querulous note of vexation comes into his voice. He won't talk about these things. Congress will have to decide them, he says. His face takes on an air of fatigue, there's a sagging look under the eyes of having been up late at his desk, of sleepless nights.

'Thank you, Mr. President,' a voice says. The President's gray face is hidden by the younger fresher unworried faces of the reporters turning to make for the door.

### *Only a Handful of Men*

When you have an appointment with someone in the East Wing of the White House you have to go first to a little glass sentry box set up in the middle of the short barred off street that divides the White House grounds from the Treasury Building. The secret service men check your name with their list. When you have been identified, you walk past the barricade and up the low steps to the porch. In an airy corridor a few men in khaki are lounging on a rushbottomed colonial bench. A sergeant ushers you into a little office where a blueeyed girl with a pompadour tells you that the man you have come to see has been detained, and won't you please wait a minute, and hands you the morning's *New York Times*.

It's quiet and cool there in the small modestly furnished office. You read through the news columns that interest you, and then you read the book reviews, and then you read the financial page, and at last you turn back to the editorials. You've read all the letters and are starting in on the sports when the young lady, who from time to time has encouraged you with accounts of how things are progressing in the inner office, at length tells you with a smile that you can go in now.

The man you have come to see is sitting at a desk in another small office with a window behind him. He is a tall stooping man with a high forehead and nose glasses. For a flitting instant there's a recollection of Woodrow Wilson's long pale stubborn face. You can see that he has been ill. There's a waxy almost transparent look about his skin. At first he has a little difficulty finding his words as he talks. He stammers a little. There's no side about him. He doesn't talk like a man who's holding back half his mind. You feel that he trusts your respect for the seriousness and selflessness of his purpose, that he feels that if it is his purpose it must be a good one.

The place has an air of seclusion like a den in a large house in the country. It's quiet in the office. Perhaps you only imagine the faint hum of energy like a generating plant. Is it real or imagined, the feeling like terror that comes from being close to a source of power over the destinies of many men? As he talks, he keeps looking away from you across the green sheltered lawn towards the pedimented main building of the White House.

You have to start him off with questions. They are the old clumsy questions. Is there a rift appearing between the White House and the country? Is it possible for the commander in chief in a global war, the man a Southern Senator has said his dearest wish was to nominate for President of the United States of the World, to keep in touch with the picayune unglobal needs and aspirations and reactions of the people of the fortyeight states of the Union on this segment of a continent? The questions aren't very well put. You don't have much confidence in questions anyway. Nobody ever learned anything by asking questions.

The man you have come to see is patient about the questions. He doesn't evade them or bristle at them. You feel that he doesn't hear them. Some time ago he made up his mind and closed its windows on the world. He starts talking about how the running of the war is necessarily in the hands of a few men. Only they know the facts. The President knows things nobody else knows. A great deal of his time, a great deal of his thinking, has to be on the level of the four leaders of the United Nations — Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, the Generalissimo. There are decisions that only these four men can make. Below that is the level of general staffs, of coordination of campaigns, the worldwide allocation of munitions, Lend Lease. The facts upon which these decisions were based are known only to a handful of men.

Several times he used the phrase 'only a handful of men.'

I mentioned Congress and strikes and food production. He frowned. A lot of that was politics. The press was always puffing up the importance of domestic problems. Problems made a great splash at first and gradually they were solved and people forgot them. In the White House they were bored with this way of looking at things. If the war were brought to a successful issue, all these troublesome things would fall into line. Did I realize how much work had

to go into every separate decision as to what munitions were to go to what front, for an example, how much time had to be taken up on the level of the four leaders? Only a handful of men had the information on which to base an opinion. It was boring to come back to the petty misunderstandings of domestic problems. They should wait until victory. With the victory all these things would fall into line.

'How?' the small question was in my mind but I didn't ask it. It was time to go. He had talked pleasantly and patiently and he was a very busy man. I said goodbye.

As I walked out, past the limp guards, enjoying the civilian-in-uniform look these young men still had in spite of years of military training, and past the broadfaced secret service men in the little glass shelter and out onto the hurrying noontime crowds and cars and taxicabs of the street that the flailing sunshine lashed like rain, I pictured the man I had been talking to walking back with long unsteady strides across the secluded lawn to the central part of the White House where life went on on the level of the four leaders.

## 6

### *Departure*

It's dark under the great soapcolored Roman vaults of the Union Station. Not much daylight gets in through the grimed windows. The electric bulbs have the redeyed look of having been up all night. So many people have absorbed all the light. The floor, the benches, the entrances are dark with shifting masses of people. About half of them are young men in uniform. Negro families are spread around the benches. Cues fan out in shifting tentacles from every ticketwindow, from the information booths, from the newsstands, from the telegraph offices. In the telephone room men sitting on upended suitcases wait glumly for a chance at the booths. In the dim blurred light of the glass trainshed sailors in whites with their heavy canvas seabags on their shoulders are being mustered into ranks. A stream of men, women, and children is flowing sluggishly down the platform towards the New York train. No seats in the coaches. Everything booked in the Pullmans. Just as I'm sliding into a place at a table in the diner, I see a man I know.

'Hello,' he says, as he shakes hands. 'You ought to have called me up sooner. I bet you've seen nothing but liberals.' He grins. He has protruding brown eyes and a brown round face with a big jaw in it. We sit down side by side. 'I used to think I was a liberal once. But they've turned out no good.' He made a downward gesture with his hand. 'I don't mean they don't mean well. But they've proved themselves unable to put their ideas across. They don't stick together. They're not coherent. They aren't tough enough to survive in the battle of Washington, they're too yellow to slug it out man to man, they're not efficient. My quarrel with a lot of these New Deal agencies is they don't deliver. I been

in all of them. I'm working for the army now, thank God . . .' He suddenly rubbed his hand across his forehead. 'Here I am spilling my guts and I haven't even had a drink yet. Hey, waiter!'

We ordered some drinks and lunch. 'Well, go on!' he shouted above the thumping of the train. 'What have they told you? You spill something now.'

'For sheer human suffering the foxholes of Bataan have nothing on the foxholes of Washington.'

' "Don't cheer, men, the poor fellows are dying." ' He threw back his head and laughed uproariously.

'In all the conversations I've heard for and against this man and that man, nobody has ever mentioned whether he was doing a good job. Efficiency never seems to come up in Congress or in any of the powwows I've listened in on at all. It's all — Is he right politically? Has he the right ideas?'

'Hell, that's natural. This town's a vast clearing house. There's no real work done here.'

'But there must be some people doing an efficient job of paper work.'

'The country does the job. Washington is no place for brighteyed idealists, even if their ideal is efficient work.'

'Why not?'

'The stakes are too high . . . Has there ever been a time since Cleopatra's barge when the stakes were so high? . . . Ever read about the Roman Empire? Since the days of Caesar and Crassus and Pompey there's never been a time when so much direct power was within the grasp of a few men's hands.'

'All the more need to work in the public interest.'

'Interests in the plural is the thing in this town. Lately, I've had a good deal to do with the British. The difference between our boys and the Britishers is that the Britishers always put England first and the old firm second. With our boys, it's the other way around.'

'Do you honestly think so?'

He nodded vigorously over his plate. 'Look at your idealist. Look what happens to him. He comes down here in the public interest. That's what he thinks, anyway. If he has any brains he's probably had theories and spouted them around at some time in his life. The Dies committee gets on his trail. Right away he's a red. Maybe he's been a tulip fancier or gone in swimming without any clothes on. He's a crackpot. He's a nudist. The Kerr committee makes him miserable digging up his past. He either runs to cover and stops trying to do anything or else his boss puts him in cold storage. He's not a party man. Say he's just out to save the American people some money. The first time anybody needs to be fed to the wolves, out he goes on his fanny. What comeback has he? A letter to the *Nation*. If he's a real conspiratorial Communist the party protects him. He sits pretty. If he's a crook he's got partners in crime. An unattached individual citizen has no more chance than a man trying to fight a

tank with a croquet mallet. We live in a world of machines. Some machines are made of steel; others are made up of men.'

'Isn't a good deal of the government machinery antiquated? I don't mean that selfgovernment is antiquated. It hasn't really begun yet.'

'Antiquated! They've got an engine built for a side-wheeler, one of those old excursion boats, and they're trying to fly an airplane with it. What do you expect?'

From the train whenever the line passed through a town or near a group of houses we could see Victory gardens, carefully tilled plots rich in curling ranks of corn, stately poles of beans, fat cabbages, lacy patches of potatoes in flower.

'Look how well we cultivate gardens,' I said. 'I bet half the people growing vegetables this year never had a hoe in their hands. They are doing a hell of a good job.'

'Sure, but don't forget that the knowhow exists. Any fool can read a book and plant a garden. The science of government ain't.'

'What about the Constitution?'

He suddenly looked tired. 'This is over my head . . . I'm a realist,' he said in a shaky voice. 'All I meant, I guess, was that the present gang has shot its bolt. We got to have a new outfit, new leadership, new ideas.'

Beyond Baltimore when we came out into the sunlight after the tunnel, the train passed between vast low factory buildings prettily camouflaged with clouds and hills and pictures of trees and houses.

'Now that's a good job,' he cried. 'My work's part of that, that makes me feel good.'

Across immense runways new fighting planes stretched in ranks as far as you could see. 'I don't care whether it's just for war or not. It's wonderful . . . I was born in the old country and I know it's freedom we are fighting for. You can't separate any of it from freedom here and in England . . . If freedom could find a way of running its own affairs . . . that would be democracy.'

*Washington, D.C., Summer, 1943*

#### QUESTIONS

1. Quote brief descriptions of places Dos Passos visited and people he observed.
2. Whose portrait, given in greater detail, stands out most clearly?
3. What is meant by "republican simplicity"? What aspects of the Capitol and White House suggest this quality?
4. What effective figures of speech does Dos Passos use in describing the reaction of the galleries to the Senate's decision?
5. What is your over-all impression of Washington from reading this article?
6. What do the interviews suggest about the Government? What hope is finally expressed for the future of democracy?

## COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION VII

1. What scene from this section do you remember most vividly? what individual detail, not necessarily from that scene? Without referring to the selections, write a one-paragraph description of a picture you recall from each one. Then compare the originals with your versions.
2. Compare point of view in these selections. Which writer stands outside the scene he is describing? Which writer identifies himself with a character in the scene? Suppose the airman had described Steinbeck's Oklahoma or Washington, D.C.; what would he have had to leave out? What sort of things are best described from the air?
3. What underlying theme, if any, supports each of these descriptions? Which do you consider most significant? Mention several ways in which a descriptive piece can serve a valuable purpose.
4. Discuss the photographic and imaginative elements in each of these selections. Which writers present the most factual detail which is not illuminated by the imagination?
5. Which of these writers use the most striking or effective figures of speech? Can you find an outstanding descriptive passage with no figures of speech in it? If so, what makes it outstanding?
6. Make a numbered list of topics treated by Langewiesche, by Steinbeck, and by Dos Passos. Which writer has the most formal organization?

## THEME TOPICS

1. Describe a section of the country as seen from a train or plane, or a harbor seen from a boat. Draw an interesting conclusion, like Langewiesche, about its geography, industry, or civilization.
2. Describe the most beautiful or interesting place you have ever seen; for example, a favorite fishing spot, seashore, mountain, canyon, or cave.
3. Keeping your eyes closed, describe a cool spot in the woods by a brook, a musical recording, a summer evening on the city sidewalks, or a big league baseball game, through the medium of your other senses. Study Carrighar for technique.
4. Describe an assembly of persons, like Dos Passos' session of the Senate; for example, the Saturday afternoon movie before the lights go out, a bus load of people, a town meeting, a barber or beauty shop, or the sidelines at a parade.
5. Write a "still life" description of some interesting object or collection of objects, such as a painting in an art gallery, a garden, or a tank of tropical fish.
6. Write a detailed report, like Steinbeck's, of conditions in a slum section, flood area, badly run institution or factory you have visited, with a thesis that something should be done about it.





## SECTION VIII

# CHARACTER

Read anything — how-to-do-it article, humorous essay, short story, opinion on the world situation — and what do you find yourself reading *about*, sooner or later? People. The corner druggist and what he thinks of our foreign policy, the author and his adventures in Alaska, Romeo and Juliet and young love . . . but whatever the topic, *people* is what readers are most interested in.

You can make a good living writing about interesting people you look up and interview, and a better living, if you have the talent, writing about people you imagine, in fiction. In this section we are especially concerned with real people, as portrayed in biographical sketch and profile. This is a big field of writing. But there is a knack to it, to catching the essential features of the subject, physical and mental, and making him come alive on paper. It requires keen, thorough observation, hard work at research, writing and rewriting, and, in addition, that *x*-element of the imagination, without which you'll have the required number of words but no picture, no lasting impression in the reader's mind.

The authors in this section will demonstrate how they get the essence of a human personality down in black and white. Sandburg's full-length portrait of Mary Todd is a particularly good model for the beginning writer.

What are the ingredients of this sketch? How does Sandburg start? The real portrait of Mary Todd, after Sandburg's introductory remarks on her family background, begins with *physical description* of Mary leading immediately to mention of her outstanding *character traits*. Here she comes: "Miss Mary Todd was twenty-two years old, plump, swift, beaming, with ready answers slipping from a sharp tongue, in the year that Springfield, and Abraham Lincoln, became acquainted with her. She had her gifts, a smooth soft skin, soft brown hair, and flashing clear blue eyes. With her somewhat short figure sheathed in a gown of white with black stripes, cut low at the neck and giving free play to her swift neck muscles, her skirt fluffed out in a slightly balloonish hoop, shod

in modish ballroom slippers, she was a centre of likes and dislikes among those who came to the house where her sister was mistress."

There's a good model of the detailed *physical description* which is usually helpful in establishing a character. Notice, though, that Sandburg manages to suggest action in a couple of places ("flashing clear blue eyes," "ready answers slipping from a sharp tongue," "centre of likes and dislikes"), and remember that in the Description section we noticed that description of something in motion is more effective than static description. Notice, also, that Sandburg selects those physical features ("flashing clear blue eyes," "swift neck muscles") which suggest Mary's outstanding *character traits*. These traits, we learn immediately, are her "vitality," a bent for "sarcasm," "cultivation," "style," and "strength and will." In brief, Mary is introduced as a vivid, brilliant, impetuous woman who knows what she wants and intends to get it: Sandburg has a dominant *interpretation* of his character which he puts across through his description of her appearance and listing of her character traits.

That's a tall order — to get all that, physical description, character traits, key interpretation, into the first few paragraphs. And yet, as we'll see, a great novelist like Dickens can do it all in a few *sentences*. The way to do it is to get to know your subject thoroughly, to write out, perhaps as a list, his description and outstanding traits; then to try to get beyond that, to identify yourself *with* him, see things from his point of view, get actually into his skin — and *then*, after writing rough accounts of his appearance and traits as warm-ups, to begin to write your rounded profile.

Some other tips from Sandburg will help you, too. One excellent way to establish character traits is by *illustrative anecdotes*. For example — Mary Todd was strong-minded: when she couldn't walk through the Springfield mud without soiling her shoes, she didn't hesitate to hitch a ride with a truck driver (drayman). She quickly and unreasonably "flew off the handle": when a dancing partner, sincerely wishing to compliment her, told her she danced "with the ease of a serpent," she bitingly dismissed him in the middle of the dance. This is one of the easiest devices to use, but unless you force yourself to dig up some good stories about your subject *before* you begin to write, you'll end up with just a boring catalogue of character traits ("loads of fun, a top athlete, wonderful sense of humor," etc.) but nothing to *convince* your reader about that wonderful sense of humor.

And, if your subject is not deaf and dumb, why not let him talk to the reader? *Use of dialogue* always livenes up a piece of writing. Sandburg uses dialogue for his "punch" ending — Mary Todd, hearing of someone who had married an old man for his horses and gold, flaring out, "Is that true? *I* would rather marry a good man, a man of mind, with bright prospects for fame and power, than to marry all the horses, gold, and bones in the world."

The other writers in this section can show us a few more tricks. Take Ernie

Pyle's account of General Omar Bradley. It doesn't have the solid, logical structure that Sandburg's sketch has. It is extremely informal, with short sentences, short, choppy paragraphs, a bit of description thrown out here, a saying of the General's there, an interesting habit elsewhere — yet, in the end, the jigsaw pieces all fall into place. The reader goes away with a definite conception of General Omar Bradley as a thoughtful, patient, understanding man who in his unpretentious way was one of the top generals of the war. How has Ernie Pyle accomplished this?

By a multiplicity of those vivid, illustrative anecdotes — the anecdote method fits right in with his informality — and by skillful reporting of his subject *as seen by others*. He begins not with Bradley but with Bradley's driver, Sergeant Stout, and a story that brings out Stout's love for his commander. Then we meet the General — but with a minimum of physical description ("His face showed . . . kindness and calmness . . . looked like a schoolteacher rather than a soldier"). Soon, we are hearing more stories about Bradley; then meeting his aides; then hearing still more of what Sergeant Stout, his driver, thinks of him. The longest quotation from the General comes at the end, in answer to a question on how he feels about sending men into battle, to meet death. Bradley's reply sums up his honesty, human sympathy, and sense of responsibility. This informal method is a good one to use on a boy or girl in school with you. It is more difficult than it seems, because it depends on the writer's absolute sincerity.

The sketch of a character seen through others' eyes has been developed into a science in the *New Yorker* profiles. According to Margaret Harriman, the profile writer interviews his subject intensively, and then *also* interviews "(a) people who have long known and loved the subject, and (b) people who have long known and hated the subject." The writer then mulls over his notes and produces a profile. You can see that there's a different, more complex approach here. Except for the delightful fairy-tale beginning ("Once upon a time, in a far country called Riverside Drive, a miracle child was born and her name was Clare Boothe"), Margaret Harriman's sketch has some resemblance to Ernie Pyle's in depending on other people's reports about Clare Boothe, and in containing many anecdotes. Physical description ("She is a blonde, with a complexion that is actually pearl-like . . .") and listing of character traits ("amused, tolerant, unusually good-looking woman who has, perhaps, a blind spot in her perceptions") are both kept to a minimum.

And yet, how different is the effect which "The Candor Kid: Clare Boothe" produces upon the reader. It is more solid: many more facts about Clare Boothe Luce's life are given, and in well-organized paragraphs, sometimes half a page long, with topic sentences. At the same time, the tone is lighter — much of it is merely gossip. Ernie Pyle is in dead earnest about General Bradley, whom he considers a great man; Margaret Harriman is kidding Clare Boothe, in many

places, and approaches Ernie Pyle's seriousness only in the sentence about "the tragic and strangely identical deaths of her mother and her daughter." A concoction with a tang to it, this *New Yorker* profile! Unless you can handle irony (make your words suggest the opposite of what they say) you had better not attempt it. But you can improve your paragraphing from studying "Clare Boothe" and also learn how to introduce remarks of other people about your subject that suggest an unexpected side to his or her character.

Winston Churchill, in his "George Bernard Shaw," comes to grips with a great contemporary's *ideas*. This is the most unusual sketch so far, for a writer does not usually quarrel with his subject. But most writers are not Churchills. This is a brilliant piece, written in the short sentences of which Churchill is the consummate master. "Mr. Bernard Shaw was one of my earliest antipathies," Churchill begins. He tells of their first clash; and the impression he retained, from that initial meeting, "of this bright, nimble, fierce, and comprehending being, Jack Frost, dancing bespangled in the sunshine." Then we see Shaw in his "snuff-colored suit, his hat turned (for some obscure economy) back to front, his black coat blending slowly into green." We see him as an "energetic, groping, angry man of about thirty, poor, the author of some unsuccessful novels and of some slashing criticisms, with a good knowledge of music and painting, and a command of the high lights of indignation." So, with a few bold strokes, Shaw's appearance and outstanding traits are depicted.

But Churchill has only begun his real task: the criticism of Shaw's ideas. The feeling deepens. The words ring. Replying to what he considers Shaw's intellectually irresponsible defense of the dictators, Churchill conducts us eastward to contemplate the true conditions and accomplishments of the communistic regime in Russia — "where life is unsafe; where liberty is unknown; where grace and culture are dying; and where armaments and preparations for war are rife." But he ends with a lighter, and equally sincere, tribute to the great dramatist, "saint, sage, and clown; venerable, profound, and irrepressible." Again, not an easy piece of writing to imitate. If, however, you ever have occasion to pass judgment on someone with whom you strongly disagree, Churchill's "George Bernard Shaw" can show you how to do it fairly and powerfully.

Finally, Charles Dickens gives us characterization in miniature. This is the novelist's art. Because the character is so intensely *felt* through the action, a few details — a snatch of dialogue, an unusual mannerism, a dominant trait — are enough for us. Immediately, we believe. We believe, for example, in Scrooge — "a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge!" — with his red eyes, pointed nose, lips blue with the cold — as "solitary as an oyster." We believe in that "gloomy-looking lady . . . dark, like her brother . . . with very heavy eyebrows, nearly meeting over her large nose" — Miss Murdstone; we believe in her even more the minute she opens her mouth to inquire about poor David Copperfield: "'Is that your boy, sister-in-law? . . . Generally speaking, I don't like boys.

How d'ye do, boy?" Brilliant writing does this, humorous comparisons like that of Scrooge to the oyster, vivid adjectives describing Miss Murdstone's eyebrows or Uriah Heep's hands ["his lank forefinger followed up every line as he read, and made clammy tracks along the page (or so I fully believed) like a snail"], clever dialogue. And don't miss the dramatic change by which Miss Havisham, in *Great Expectations*, seen first, dimly, as dressed in bridal white, is suddenly revealed as old, faded, in an ancient, grotesque wedding gown yellowed with age.

Study of a novelist's characterizations is a fine way to master the secret of *interpretation* of a character, perhaps the best way to make the person you are writing about live as a unique individual, with his own peculiar slant on life. That, after all, is what every profile writer is finally aiming at: the inner man, the inner woman. That is the mystery and fascination of people; and trying to reproduce their actions, mannerisms, appearance, speech, effect on others, hidden desires and disappointments and hopes will deepen your own philosophy and understanding.

*Charles Dickens once said that he could actually hear every word spoken by his characters. He had a photographic memory for faces, gestures, dress. After working as a child in a London sweatshop, receiving a skimpy education, and then covering crime and politics for the papers, he became a world-famous author at twenty-four with his Pickwick Papers (1836–37). A critic predicted that, having gone up like a rocket (there were “Pickwick” chintzes and “Pickwick” cigars in all the stores), he would come down like a stick; but Dickens went on to his masterpieces, David Copperfield (1849–50) and Great Expectations (1860–61). When some considered his characters exaggerated, Dickens retorted that it is not always the fault of “the writer who colours highly” but now and then of “the reader whose eye for colour is a little dull.”*

*Scrooge \**

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dogdays; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often “came down” handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, “My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?” No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, “No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!”

But what did Scrooge care! It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way

\* From *A Christmas Carol*.

along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call "nuts" to Scrooge.

*Miss Havisham \**

In an arm-chair, with an elbow resting on the table and her head leaning on that hand, sat the strangest lady I have ever seen, or shall ever see.

She was dressed in rich materials — satins, and lace, and silks — all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses less splendid than the dress she wore, and half-packed trunks, were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had but one shoe on — the other was on the table near her hand — her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a Prayer-book, all confusedly heaped about the looking-glass.

It was not in the first few moments that I saw all these things, though I saw more of them in the first moments than might be supposed. But, I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its lustre, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose, had shrunk to skin and bone. Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to one of our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress, that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could.

*Pickwick and His Friends †*

A casual observer might possibly have remarked nothing extraordinary in the bald head, and circular spectacles, which were intently turned towards his (the secretary's) face, during the reading of the above resolutions: to those who knew that the gigantic brain of Pickwick was working beneath that forehead, and that the beaming eyes of Pickwick were twinkling behind those glasses, the sight was indeed an interesting one. There sat the man who had traced to their source the mighty ponds of Hampstead, and agitated the scientific world with his Theory of Tittlebats, as calm and unmoved as the deep waters

\* From *Great Expectations*.

† From *The Pickwick Papers*.



of the one on a frosty day, or as a solitary specimen of the other in the inmost recesses of an earthen jar. And how much more interesting did the spectacle become, when, starting into full life and animation, as a simultaneous call for "Pickwick" burst from his followers, that illustrious man slowly mounted into the Windsor chair, on which he had been previously seated, and addressed the club himself had founded. What a study for an artist did that exciting scene present! The eloquent Pickwick, with one hand gracefully concealed behind his coat tails, and the other waving in air, to assist his glowing declamation; his elevated position revealing those tights and gaiters, which, had they clothed an ordinary man, might have passed without observation, but which, when Pickwick clothed them — if we may use the expression — inspired voluntary awe and respect; surrounded by the men who had volunteered to share the perils of his travels, and who were destined to participate in the glories of his discoveries. On his right hand sat Mr. Tracy Tupman — the too susceptible Tupman, who to the wisdom and experience of maturer years superadded the enthusiasm and ardour of a boy, in the most interesting and pardonable of human weaknesses — love. Time and feeding had expanded that once romantic form; the black silk waistcoat had become more and more developed; inch by inch had the gold watch-chain beneath it disappeared from within the range of Tupman's vision; and gradually had the capacious chin encroached upon the borders of the white cravat: but the soul of Tupman had known no change — admiration of the fair sex was still its ruling passion. On the left of his great leader sat the poetic Snodgrass, and near him again the sporting Winkle, the former poetically enveloped in a mysterious blue coat with a canine-skin collar, and the latter communicating additional lustre to a new green shooting coat, plaid neckerchief, and closely-fitted drabs.

*Miss Murdstone \**

It was Miss Murdstone who was arrived, and a gloomy-looking lady she was; dark, like her brother, whom she greatly resembled in face and voice; and with very heavy eyebrows, nearly meeting over her large nose, as if, being disabled by the wrongs of her sex from wearing whiskers, she had carried them to that account. She brought with her two uncompromising hard black boxes, with her initials on the lids in hard brass nails. When she paid the coachman, she took her money out of a hard steel purse, and she kept the purse in a very jail of a bag, which hung upon her arm by a heavy chain, and shut up like a bite. I had never, at that time, seen such a metallic lady altogether as Miss Murdstone was.

She was brought into the parlor with many tokens of welcome, and there formally recognized my mother as a new and near relation. Then she looked at me, and said, —

\* From *David Copperfield*.

"Is that your boy, sister-in-law?"

My mother acknowledged me.

"Generally speaking," said Miss Murdstone, "I don't like boys. How d'ye do, boy?"

Under these encouraging circumstances, I replied that I was very well, and that I hoped she was the same, — with such an indifferent grace that Miss Murdstone disposed of me in two words, —

"Wants manner!"

Having uttered which with great distinctness, she begged the favor of being shown to her room, which became to me, from that time forth, a place of awe and dread, wherein the two black boxes were never seen open or known to be left unlocked, and where (for I peeped in once or twice when she was out) numerous little steel fetters and rivets, with which Miss Murdstone embellished herself when she was dressed, generally hung upon the looking-glass in formidable array.

As well as I could make out, she had come for good, and had no intention of ever going again. She began to "help" my mother next morning, and was in and out of the store-closet all day, putting things to rights, and making havoc in the old arrangements. Almost the first remarkable thing I observed in Miss Murdstone was her being constantly haunted by a suspicion that the servants had a man secreted somewhere on the premises. Under the influence of this delusion, she dived into the coal-cellar at the most untimely hours, and scarcely ever opened the door of a dark cupboard, without clapping it to again, in the belief that she had got him.

Though there was nothing very airy about Miss Murdstone, she was a perfect lark in point of getting up. She was up (and as I believe to this hour, looking for that man) before anybody in the house was stirring. Peggotty gave it as her opinion that she even slept with one eye open; but I could not concur in this idea; for I tried it myself after hearing the suggestion thrown out, and found it couldn't be done.

On the very first morning after her arrival, she was up and ringing her bell at cock-crow. When my mother came down to breakfast and was going to make the tea, Miss Murdstone gave her a kind of peck on the cheek, which was her nearest approach to a kiss, and said, —

"Now, Clara, my dear, I am come here, you know, to relieve you of all the trouble I can. You're much too pretty and thoughtless" — my mother blushed but laughed, and seemed not to dislike this character — "to have any duties imposed upon you that can be undertaken by me. If you'll be so good as give me your keys, my dear, I'll attend to all this sort of thing in future."

From that time Miss Murdstone kept the keys in her own little jail all day, and under her pillow all night, and my mother had no more to do with them than I had.

*Uriah Heep \**

When the pony-chaise stopped at the door, and my eyes were intent upon the house, I saw a cadaverous face appear at a small window on the ground floor (in a little round tower that formed one side of the house), and quickly disappear. The low arched door then opened, and the face came out. It was quite as cadaverous as it had looked in the window, though in the grain of it there was that tinge of red which is sometimes to be observed in the skins of red-haired people. It belonged to a red-haired person — a youth of fifteen, as I take it now, but looking much older — whose hair was cropped as close as the closest stubble; who had hardly any eyebrows, and no eyelashes, and eyes of a red-brown; so unsheltered and unshaded, that I remember wondering how he went to sleep. He was high-shouldered and bony; dressed in decent black, with a white wisp of a neckcloth; buttoned up to the throat; and had a long, lank, skeleton hand, which particularly attracted my attention, as he stood at the pony's head, rubbing his chin with it, and looking up at us in the chaise.

"Is Mr. Wickfield at home, Uriah Heep?" said my aunt.

"Mr. Wickfield's at home, ma'am," said Uriah Heep, "if you'll please to walk in there," — pointing with his long hand to the room he meant.

We got out, and, leaving him to hold the pony, went into a long low parlor looking towards the street, from the window of which I caught a glimpse, as I went in, of Uriah Heep breathing into the pony's nostrils, and immediately covering them with his hand, as if he were putting some spell upon him. . . .

But, seeing a light in the little round office, and immediately feeling myself attracted towards Uriah Heep, who had a sort of fascination for me, I went in there instead. I found Uriah, reading a great fat book with such demonstrative attention, that his lank forefinger followed up every line as he read, and made clammy tracks along the page (or so I fully believed), like a snail.

"You are working late to-night, Uriah," says I.

"Yes, Master Copperfield," says Uriah.

As I was getting on the stool opposite, to talk to him more conveniently, I observed he had not such a thing as a smile about him, and that he could only widen his mouth and make two hard creases down his cheeks, one on each side, to stand for one.

"I am not doing office-work, Master Copperfield," said Uriah.

"What work, then?" I asked.

"I am improving my legal knowledge, Master Copperfield," said Uriah. "I am going through Tidd's Practice. O, what a writer Mr. Tidd is, Master Copperfield!"

My stool was such a tower of observation, that as I watched him reading on

\* From *David Copperfield*.

again, after this rapturous exclamation, and following up the lines with his forefinger, I observed that his nostrils, which were thin and pointed, with sharp dints in them, had a singular and most uncomfortable way of expanding and contracting themselves, — that they seemed to twinkle instead of his eyes, which hardly ever twinkled at all.

“I suppose you are quite a great lawyer?” I said, after looking at him for some time.

“Me, Master Copperfield?” said Uriah. “O no! I’m a very umble person.”

It was no fancy of mine about his hands, I observed; for he frequently ground the palms against each other as if to squeeze them dry and warm, besides often wiping them, in a stealthy way, on his pocket-handkerchief.

“I am well aware that I am the umblest person going,” said Uriah Heep, modestly; “let the other be where he may. My mother is likewise a very umble person. We live in a numble abode, Master Copperfield, but have much to be thankful for. My father’s former calling was umble. He was a sexton.”

“What is he now?” I asked.

“He is a partaker of glory at present, Master Copperfield,” said Uriah Heep. “But we have much to be thankful for. How much have I to be thankful for in living with Mr. Wickfield!”

I asked Uriah if he had been with Mr. Wickfield long.

“I have been with him going on four year, Master Copperfield,” said Uriah, shutting up his book, after carefully marking the place where he had left off. “Since a year after my father’s death. How much have I to be thankful for, in that! How much have I to be thankful for, in Mr. Wickfield’s kind intention to give me my articles, which would otherwise not lay within the umble means of mother and self!”

“Then when your artiled time is over, you’ll be a regular lawyer, I suppose?” said I.

“With the blessing of Providence, Master Copperfield,” returned Uriah.

“Perhaps you’ll be a partner in Mr. Wickfield’s business one of these days,” I said, to make myself agreeable; “and it will be Wickfield and Heep, or Heep late Wickfield.”

“O no, Master Copperfield,” returned Uriah, shaking his head, “I am much too umble for that!”

#### QUESTIONS

1. What quality in the description of Scrooge is emphasized by various synonyms and figures of speech?
2. What color comes to your mind in connection with Miss Havisham? Uriah Heep? Miss Murdstone?
3. What characteristics would you ascribe to Miss Murdstone and Uriah Heep on the basis of dialogue alone?

4. List words with unpleasant connotations which contribute to the reader's impression of Uriah Heep.
5. What was the pardonable weakness of Mr. Tracy Tupman? What was his most outstanding physical feature?
6. What characteristic gestures did Mr. Pickwick make in delivering his oration?

Carl Sandburg

## Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years

*Carl Sandburg was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his biography of Abraham Lincoln. He is the son of Swedish immigrants to Illinois; volunteered for the Spanish-American War, worked his way through college, was a newspaperman in Chicago in 1914 when the best American writing was being done there. He won the Levinson Prize with his famous poem "Chicago." "Among the biographers I am a first-rate poet, and among poets a good biographer," Sandburg says. "I don't care how I am rated. I'm thankful to keep out of jail." Abraham Lincoln, "the greatest study of an American ever written by another American," was composed over a period of fourteen years, on a typewriter set up on a cracker box in Sandburg's attic.*

And now there came to the house of Ninian W. Edwards in 1840 a young woman from Lexington, Kentucky. This was her second visit. She had been there three years before on a short visit. Now she had come to stay. She was Miss Mary Todd, and was a younger sister of the wife of Ninian W. Edwards, Elizabeth.

They were the granddaughters of Todds who had fought with Washington through the American Revolution and with Daniel Boone in Kentucky at the time Boone was saying he was "an instrument ordained by God to settle the wilderness." Their father, Robert Smith Todd, had been a captain in the War of 1812, had served in both houses of the legislature in Kentucky, and was president of the Bank of Kentucky in Lexington.

Miss Mary Todd was twenty-two years old, plump, swift, beaming, with ready answers slipping from a sharp tongue, in the year that Springfield, and Abraham Lincoln, became acquainted with her. She had her gifts, a smooth

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soft skin, soft brown hair, and flashing clear blue eyes. With her somewhat short figure sheathed in a gown of white with black stripes, cut low at the neck and giving free play to her swift neck muscles, her skirt fluffed out in a slightly balloonish hoop, shod in modish ballroom slippers, she was a centre of likes and dislikes among those who came to the house where her sister was mistress.

Though her tongue and its sarcasm that came so quickly and so often, brought dislikes and hates, there was a shine and a bubbling, a foaming over of vitality, that won friends. For Lincoln, as he came to know her, she was lighted with sprays of magnets. If only as a decorative outline, she struck him as paramount and incomparable.

She was the first aggressively brilliant feminine creature his friends ever knew of who crossed his path and waylaid him with resources known to an accomplished and vital woman. She haunted him and held his attentions by the use of age-old fascinations, difficult of analysis by man because they move in a world of intuitive half-lights, swift gestures, and shaded intonations, lies, white lies, and lies shifting a medium course between lies and white lies. He could keep his head and outguess lights, shoals, and sand-bars of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and take a flatboat through; with Mary Todd he lost his head. His experience was rich with rivers, starved with women; as one woman remarked, he didn't *go* as much as other young men for "ladies' company."

Besides the charm that attached to Mary Todd in her smooth soft skin, soft brown hair, swift movement of neck muscles, flying glimpses of slippers, she was a triumph of cultivation: she had what were known as accomplishments; she had gone to the schools where the accomplishments were taught, and she had all that the most aristocratic schools of Kentucky could implant. She spoke and read the French language, had partaken often of dinners in which only talk in French was permitted, had read French classics of literature in the original.

Conversation, manners, belles-lettres, the piano and approved classical music, were taught in the schools she attended. How to be polite and suave while not stiff nor garrulous, how to mingle the sprightly and the reserved, how to conform in the stiff points of etiquette while maintaining a superior ease in the precise and the punctilious, these were subjects of instruction in which she had been tempered and drilled, coaxed, reminded, and told, from the time she wore bibs till she first stepped into a low-cut ballroom gown. The one word "nice" and the two words "nice people" were words almost born to her with her tongue.

She had kept a native and bottom fibre of strength and will; she had left her home in Kentucky and taken up a new home in Illinois because of a dispute with her stepmother. She was impetuous, picked the ridiculous angle, the weak point of any one she disliked and spoke it with thrust of phrase. In her first Springfield days Bill Herndon danced a waltz with her, and finding her the most

amazingly smooth and easy waltzer he had ever danced with, he told her she seemed to glide through the waltz with the ease of a serpent. She drew back, flashed her eyes, retorted, "Mr. Herndon, comparison to a serpent is rather severe irony, especially to a newcomer," bowed with accomplished dignity, and was gone. She could be hurt, just like that, when no one wanted to hurt her.

Far from ordinary was Miss Mary Todd; she was vivid, perhaps too vivid, ebullient, combative, too quick to "fly off the handle." She was in her element, moving in a swirl, delirious and inevitable when hot, stinging words were flying off her tongue, out of her lips. It connected directly with the fear and trembling that took her when a thunderstorm with zigzags of lightning came over the sky. Her temper colored her; she could shine with radiance at a gift, a word, an arrival, a surprise, an achievement of a little cherished design, at winning a withheld consent. A shaft of wanted happiness could strike deep in her.

The modish woman at a "levee" in Springfield then often wore eight or twelve starched petticoats with an overskirt of "changeable silk." There might be several "illusion skirts" worn over white satin. Mary Todd was read, informed and versed in apparel and appearance. She hummed gay little ditties putting on a flowered bonnet and tying a double-bow knot under her chin. A satisfying rose or ostrich plume in her hair was a psalm.

She embodied a thousand cunning, contradictory proverbs men have spoken about woman as a wildcat and as a sweet angel. She was vivid, perhaps too vivid. From far back in her forerunners of proud, passionate people had come this drag and lift that mixed in her personality, this paradoxical burden and balloon of personality. Her mother had died when she was a child. Visiting at Walnut Hills near Lexington, she was with a party of girls in a room when an alarm came that Indians were near. The other girls scampered under beds, into closets, but Mary Todd, finding no place to hide, stood in the centre of the room crying "Hide me, O my Saviour, hide."

Style was instinctive with her; fashion was of her desires; when she was a girl and hoop skirts were worn by women, she toiled by candlelight till late in the night basting a hoop skirt with weeping willow twigs, starting for Sunday school the next day with a girl chum, both wearing white dresses stretched tight over silly, homemade hoops; their aunt saw them and called: "What frights you are! Take those things off and then go to Sunday school." While offhand observers spoke of her as having "bounce" and "spunk," it was an understanding among her friends that she had what they chose to call "ambition" and was "an ambitious woman." She was intense with the quality Kentuckians refer to in their horses as "high-strung."

Mary Todd was decisive. She and Mercy Levering once went out in muddy weather, taking along an armful of shingles. On Fifth Street they laid shingles ahead to step on while crossing. When they came back they saw the shingles

wouldn't hold them up out of the mud. Hart, the drayman, came along with his two-wheeled sloping dray. Mary Todd called to him to give them a lift. He gee-hawed over next to the sidewalk and backed up. Mary Todd climbed on. But Mercy Levering didn't; she was afraid of how she would look and still more of what people would say. And as Mary Todd was driven to the Edwards' house, windows flew up and heads popped out to see, as Dr. E. H. Merryman put it in verses later, "this lady gay in silken coat and feathers white, a-riding on a dray."

There was "go" to her, an urge sending her toward place, power, station, "high degree." She cared deeply for all objects representative of class, the acclaim of prizes, blue ribbons, distinction. Again, like certain fast horses of the blue-grass country, she "chafed at the bit" if the restraints of life, the leashes put on the frail, mortal limbs and hours of woman, were too much and too many; or again she was full of the lust of being vividly and proudly alive for the gaze of others; her stride and attitude was that of the horse champing, the hoofs wanting to go, to be a winner known to grandstands, vast amphitheatres of spectators. She was a crucible of forces, of a blood with flame in its currents, a brain with far contrasts, with explosions sometimes that shook the entire physical framework, the entire retort that held the pathos of her fate; her tears could flow from sacs that had containers of the strength of salt tears; her laughter could dimple in wreaths running to the core of her; she was born to impulses that rode her before she could ride them. And yet after excesses of temper had worn her to a babbling and moaning exhaustion, she could rise and stand up to battle again for a purpose definitely formed.

The Todds traced back to Scottish Covenanters who fought the king and the established church of England; among Covenanters sentenced to transportation to the American colonies were two Todds; their vital and stubborn blood ran in Mary Todd. She was of a Presbyterian line crossed with Episcopalian. Her telling a Kentucky friend, before leaving for Illinois, that she was going to be the wife of some future President of the United States, may have been a piece of idle gossip or the evidence of a hope for distinction.

Society life, the social drama and its gleaming mirrors and garnished promenades, called to her; life should be a series of ceremonial occasions — interspersed with sleep, forethought, and preparations for ceremonial occasions. In the phrasing of a breakfast greeting, in the tuck of a napkin corner and the disposition of its folded triangles as related to knife, fork, plate, in the employment of a spoon for the conveyance of hot soup or the negotiation of a fork of green peas, in the buckling of a slipper or the knotting of a satin sash, there was a correct style; and superior persons were known by their use of the correct style; beyond their portals was the human rabble shading off into the incorrect, the common, the ignorant, the vulgar, the dirty, the indecent, and the perfectly disgusting.



During her first year in Springfield both Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas took their turns at being entertained by Mary Todd in the big parlor of the Edwards house, took their turns at escorting her to parties and balls; she was asked which of the two she intended to have for her husband, and answered, "The one that has the best chance of being President."

In the Edwards circle they believed there were clues to her character in a remark she passed at a party around a fireside one evening. A young woman married to a rich man far along in years was asked, "Why did you marry such a dried-up husband, such a withered-up old buck?" Her answer was, "He had lots of horses and gold." And the quick-tongued Mary Todd said in surprise: "Is that true? *I* would rather marry a good man, a man of mind, with bright prospects for fame and power, than to marry all the horses, gold, and bones in the world."

#### QUESTIONS

1. What was Mary Todd's native state? Where did she meet Lincoln? What kind of education had she had?
2. Name two of the chief character traits, good and bad, that made her "a centre of likes and dislikes."
3. Who courted Mary Todd besides Abraham Lincoln? What did she say would govern her choice between the two?
4. Find instances of repetition in the description of Mary Todd's character and appearance. What is the purpose of such repetition in a character sketch?

*Ernie Pyle, Indiana-born newspaperman and columnist, achieved world-wide fame by his sensitive accounts of the G.I. in World War II. Here Is Your War (1943) and Brave Men (1944) were best-selling collections of his columns, reading "like a rambling but acutely written series of letters to the folks back home." He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for distinguished correspondence in 1944. One of his most widely praised single columns was his description of London under air bombardment, "ringed and stabbed with fire . . . the most hateful, most beautiful single scene I have ever known." Like the G.I.'s, Ernie Pyle hated war, but felt driven to share their lives of discomfort and danger; he was killed by Japanese machine-gun fire in the Okinawa campaign, four months before V-J Day.*

The top commanders who toiled and slaved for months planning the second front were under a man-killing strain of work and responsibility. Thousands of men of high rank labored endlessly. They were up early, they worked all day, and after supper they went back to work far into the night. Seldom could you get one of them to take a day off.

Among the greatly conscientious ones in this category was Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, who was to lead all the American troops in the second front.

I ran into Sergeant Alex Stout, General Bradley's driver. The general was very fond of Alex, and in turn Alex was not afraid to look at his king or to plot in his behalf.

Alex kept saying, "General, you're working too hard. If you won't take a day off, why don't you get in the car and we'll just drive around the country for a couple of hours?" He was persistent. One day he put it to his boss again and the general said, well, as soon as he filled two more appointments he would go out for a half-hour ride. So Alex got him in the car and headed for the country.

"We drove for two hours," Alex says. "I told him I was lost and couldn't find my way back to town. But I knew where I was all the time, all right."

As you may know, I am concerned mainly with the common soldier — the well-known GI. I usually let the exalted high command shift for itself. But now I want to reverse things and write about an American general.

For three days, back in Sicily, I rode and I sat around with Lieutenant General Omar Nelson Bradley and at times I was so engulfed in stars I thought I must be a comet.

I make no bones about the fact that I am a tremendous admirer of General Bradley. I don't believe I have ever known a person to be so unanimously loved

From *Brave Men* by Ernie Pyle. Copyright, 1944, by Henry Holt and Company, Inc. Used by permission of the publishers.

and respected by the men around and under him. It would be toying with the truth to call him handsome, rather than good-looking. His face showed the kindness and calmness that lay behind it. To me General Bradley looked like a schoolteacher rather than a soldier. When I told him that, he said I wasn't so far wrong, because his father was a country schoolteacher and he himself had taught at West Point and other places. His specialty was mathematics.

The general didn't smoke at all. He took his cigarette rations and gave them away. He drank and swore in great moderation. There was no vulgarity in his speech. Back home, he said, he and Mrs. Bradley probably took one drink a month before supper. Over there where liquor was hard to get he drank hardly ever, but he did pour a dust-cutting libation for visitors who showed up at suppertime. He had three bottles of champagne that somebody gave him, and he saved those to celebrate the capture of Messina.

The general's voice was high-pitched and clear, but he spoke so gently a person couldn't hear him very far. His aides said they had never known him to speak harshly to anyone. He could be firm, terribly firm, but he was never gross nor rude. He always put people at their ease.

A quaking candidate for a commission in the officers' school at Fort Benning, Georgia, was once interviewed by General Bradley, and when the soldier came out he said, "Why, he made me feel like a general myself."

The general was just the opposite of a "smoothie." His conversation was not brilliant or unusual but it was packed with sincerity. He still had the Middle West in his vocabulary — he used such expressions as "fighting to beat the band" and "a horse of another color." There was absolutely no pretense about him, and he hated ostentation.

He didn't fly his three-star flag except when formal occasions demanded it. And his aides were full of stories about how he stayed in the background rather than call attention to himself by pushing up where he had a right to be. He didn't even own a Sam Browne belt or a dress cap.

Oddly enough, for a man so quiet and modest, he didn't mind public speaking. He was no ringing orator, but after a while his speech became powerful by its tone of intense sincerity. During vital periods of each campaign, the general always came to our correspondents' camp and, in front of a big map, gave us a complete fill-in on the situation. When he first did this back in Africa we all liked him but weren't especially impressed. But he grew on us just as he grew on everybody he worked with, and before long there wasn't a correspondent who didn't swear by him.

Despite his mildness the general was not what you would call easygoing. Nobody ran over him. He had complete confidence in himself, and once he made up his mind nothing swayed him. He was as resolute as rock, and people who worked with him had to produce or get out. They didn't get the traditional Army bawling-out from him, but they did get the gate.

He had a nice quality of respecting other people's opinions and of paying close attention to other people's conversation. I noticed that when he made a phone call he always said "If you please" to the Army operator. And on the road when an Army truck pulled out to let his three-star jeep pass, he always turned and said "Thank you" to the driver.

When he passed a bunch of engineers toiling and sweating to create a bypass around a blown-up bridge he would call out, "You're doing a nice job here," to the startled lieutenant in charge.

The general rode around the front a great deal. During the campaign in northern Sicily he averaged five hours a day in his jeep, and sometimes ran it up to eight. He insisted that jeep riding was good for the liver. A few times he used planes. He hoped to have a small plane of his own that could land practically anywhere, as it would save him hours each day.

On the front bumper of the general's jeep was a red-and-white plate displaying three stars, and of course this drew a salute from every officer or soldier who was on his toes. In heavy traffic the general was returning salutes constantly. I told him that what he needed most was a little boy to do his saluting for him. He laughed and said, "Oh, that's the way I get my exercise."

When he drove through a town the Sicilians all yelled and waved, and the general waved back. Italian policemen, discharged soldiers, and even civilians snapped up to the salute, and the general always responded. Once in a while they'd give him the Fascist salute, out of old habit, and he returned that too, but in the American way.

He didn't affect a swagger stick, but he did sometimes carry an ordinary wooden cane with a steel spike in the end. It was given to him by former Congressman Faddis of Pennsylvania.

There in Sicily, General Bradley had around him at the front, in addition to his military staff of more than a hundred officers, a little official "family" — and it really was like a little family. It consisted of his two young captain aides, his sergeant driver, his corporal orderly, and his brigadier general chief of staff.

The two aides were Captain Chester Hansen of Elizabeth, New Jersey, and Captain Lewis Bridge of Lodi, California. Both were twenty-five, both were graduated from college in 1939, Hansen from Syracuse University and Bridge from California Aggies. Their nicknames were Chet and Lew and that's what the general called them.

Both captains went through Officers' Training School at Fort Benning when General Bradley was commanding there and both came right out of the officers' school into his family. They had been with him for sixteen months and considered themselves the two most fortunate young officers in the American Army. They slept in cots under a tree about fifty yards from the general's truck, which also was parked under a tree; the general had an aversion to occupying buildings and usually kept a command post in tents out in the open.

Around headquarters the two aides were on call constantly, but for jeep traveling with the general they took alternate days. Both were bright, understanding, likable fellows who worshiped at the general's feet and did a good job representing him, in the same thoughtful manner he used.

The general's driver, Sergeant Alex Stout, was from Port Barre, Louisiana, below Baton Rouge. Although he was only twenty-three, he had been in the Army six years. He didn't, however, intend to make it a career. Sergeant Stout had been driving for General Bradley for two and a half years. He was so good that when Bradley reached North Africa he sent back to the States for him.

Stout took meticulous pride in the general's jeep. He had it fixed up with sponge-rubber cushions, and a built-in ration box under the back seat, and kept it neat as a pin.

General Bradley said having a good driver was important, for he relaxed while he was riding and he couldn't have a driver who annoyed him by going too slow or one who kept him tense by reckless driving. One night the general had a blackout driver who was so cautious and creepy he had to take the wheel himself and drive half the night.

Sergeant Stout was another devoted fan of General Bradley. "He does everything for you," the sergeant said. "I go to him with my headaches, go to him for advice, go to him for money. He treats me just like my own father does."

The general's orderly was Corporal Frank Cekada of Calumet, Michigan. Frank was the most recent one of the general's family, having been with him only since the previous March.

Frank said a colonel in Oran picked him for the job because he always kept himself looking neat and clean. He was driving a truck before he got the assignment. He had never been an orderly before but soon caught on. Frank's duties were, as he put it, "to keep the general happy." He cleaned the quarters, looked after the luggage while moving, and whenever he couldn't find Sicilian women to do the general's washing Frank did it himself.

Frank was twenty-four, and before the war was, of all things, a bartender. He said the general treated him like a personal friend and he hoped nothing would happen to the job.

General Bradley lived in an Army truck which had been fixed up like a tourist trailer. In the front end was a nice wide bed running crosswise of the truck, with a blanket bearing the initials of the United States Military Academy. Along one side of the truck was a desk with drawers under it. On the other side were a closet and washbasin. A field telephone in a leather case hung on the end of the desk. There was a big calendar on the wall and each day was marked off with an x. There was a bookrack with four or five volumes of military textbooks, one called *Our Enemy, Japan*, and a French grammar which the general never found time to study.

On the front wall over the bed were painted the dates of the campaigns

in North Africa, with the beginning and ending dates, and the Sicily invasion date.

We conjectured what date the Sicilian campaign would end on, and oddly enough the general's date turned out to be a little farther off than mine. There were no pictures in the truck, no gadgets on the tables. The general had not sent home any souvenirs, and had acquired only two for himself. One was a German Luger from Tunisia and the other a lovely Sicilian dagger with the Fascist emblem on the handle. On the wall opposite the table was a big map of that area of Sicily. It probably was the most important piece of equipment in the place.

The general sat there alone at night studying the map for hours, thinking and planning moves for the morrow over the frightful country ahead. There alone before his map many of the most important decisions were made.

It isn't customary for anybody as high as a corps commander to get too close to the actual fighting, but General Bradley insisted on keeping his command post up close, sometimes distressingly close, behind the front lines.

Once he moved into a bivouac from which the artillery was still firing, with the result that we got a good working over by German dive bombers which were after our artillery.

One day we were riding in a jeep through hilly country and just as we passed a hidden big gun at the roadside it let off a blast right over our heads. It almost burst our eardrums and practically knocked us out of our seats. For days, the general enjoyed telling how we almost got our heads blown off by our own gun.

Another day we were eating lunch at the command post of the First Infantry Division, then commanded by Major General Terry Allen. It was in a big, old building close to the front and General Allen had a whole battery of his big guns right alongside the building. They blasted away throughout lunch, and the noise was deafening. They were so close that at every volley the building shook, the table and dishes jiggled, the glassless window frames rattled, and we could feel the blast sweep through the room.

After a little of this, General Bradley turned to General Allen and said, "Terry, could you arrange to have those guns shoot over the building instead of through it?"

General Bradley had a separate mess at his own command post, in a tent a few feet away from the regular mess. He had this separate mess because at almost every meal there were visiting American or British generals there for discussions and they needed privacy and quiet while they ate. His table seated seven, and at each meal General Bradley had one junior member of his staff in as a guest. On duty the general was always spoken to as "general" or "sir" by other officers. But I noticed that on informal occasions, such as at dinner, all the general officers called him "Brad."

Almost every day he visited the headquarters of each division that was in the lines. He said he could do the work by telephone, but by going in person he could talk things over with the whole division staff, and if they were planning something he thought was not good he could talk them around to seeing it his way, rather than just flatly ordering it done.

I stood with him one day on a high observation post looking ahead at a town where we were having tough going. The Germans simply wouldn't crack. (They did later, of course.) All our officers, including the general, were worried. He said, "We've put enough pressure on already to break this situation, but still they hang on, so we'll have to figure out some other way. Some commanders believe in the theory of direct attack, accepting a thirty per cent loss of men and getting to your objective quickly, but I've tried to figure a plan for this to save as many lives as possible."

I said to him, "I never could be a general. I couldn't stand up under the responsibility of making a decision that would take human lives."

"Well," he said, "you don't sleep any too well from it. But we're in it now, and we can't get out without some loss of life. I hate like the devil to order the bombing of a city, and yet it sometimes has to be done." In speaking of being bombed and of enduring the sadness of our own casualties, he said, "It's really harder on some of the newer officers than it is on me. For although I don't like it, after all I've spent thirty years preparing a frame of mind for accepting such a thing."

As a result of all my hobnobbing with the high and mighty, I took considerable kidding from the other correspondents. When I returned to our camp the other boys said, "Uh, huh — Pyle, the doughboy's friend. Wait till all the mothers of privates hear you've started consorting with generals."

"Sure," I said, "from now on a mere colonel will have to do a couple of somersaults to get me to look at him."

Every time I passed Hal Boyle, of the Associated Press, he said out of the corner of his mouth so I could hear it, "There goes that social-climbing columnist."

And Chris Cunningham, of the United Press, conjectured that if matters kept up, in a few weeks I would be sitting around with the correspondents making such remarks as, "Well, I told Omar that his battle plan wouldn't work, but he insisted on trying it out anyhow."

And another one said, "We passed you on the road today and there you were riding with the big general, and bareheaded as usual when you know it's against the rules."

So I said, "Well, when I went with the general, I told him I couldn't find my leggings, and didn't like to wear a steel helmet, and was it all right? He said, 'Okay.'"

And then Chris chimed in and said, “That’s the way. There you go, taking advantage of the power of the press. You ought to be ashamed.”

So we had a lot of fun about my sad tumble from a long kinship with the common soldier down to the depths of associating with a general. Still, it was fine while it lasted and if I had to associate with generals I know I picked a pretty good one.

But whenever I was caught talking with anyone above the rank of major the other correspondents would say, “You’re losing the common touch, Ernie.”

I tried to excuse myself by saying, “Well, democracy includes the big as well as the little, so I have to work in a general now and then just to keep the balance.” . . .

#### QUESTIONS

1. How does Ernie Pyle disarm readers who don’t like “brass hats” before attempting to win their admiration for General Bradley?
2. What character traits affected General Bradley’s speaking ability, one favorably and one adversely?
3. Name several minor characters. What is their function in the article?
4. Where and at what time of the day did General Bradley plan his campaigns?
5. Find three good anecdotes, and tell what character trait each brings out.



Margaret Case Harriman

## The Candor Kid: Clare Boothe

*Margaret Case Harriman, one of the New Yorker's leading profile writers, specializes in theatrical subjects. As the daughter of the owner of the Algonquin Hotel in New York, where theater people congregate, Mrs. Harriman knows her subjects well, and considers them "the most entertaining . . . and . . . the nicest people to write about." Her Vicious Circle; the Story of the Algonquin Round Table (1951) uses the same material. She once expressed her feelings about the profile as follows:*

*There's so much good in the worst of us  
And so much bad in the best of us,  
It turns out that a lot of us  
Can make a pretty good living writing about the rest of us.*

Once upon a time, in a far country called Riverside Drive, a miracle child was born and her name was Clare Boothe. Over her cradle hovered so many good fairy godmothers that an S.R.O. sign was soon put up at the foot of the crib and a couple of witches who had drifted along just for the hell of it had to fly away and come back for the Wednesday matinee. To the infant Clare, the first good fairy gave Beauty, the second gave Wealth, the third Talent, the fourth Industriousness, and the fifth Success. The sixth good fairy flew around frowning for a while, thinking up a way to make a monkey out of the other fairies, and finally she waved her wand over the crib, and lo, each gift was doubled and tripled until the infant Clare was more shinningly endowed than any other infant in the land.

By that time it was Wednesday and the two witches were back, shrieking and bumping broomsticks and quarrelling over which curse each would put upon the babe. "I will give her Unpopularity, the distrust of her fellow men and women," the first witch asserted. "So go ahead, copycat," sneered the second witch. "I have already given her Candor, which amounts to the same thing." And the two witches dropped their gifts in a shower of stars and hisses and departed, thinking the infant Clare was sound asleep. But there they were mistaken. Clare was as wide awake as anything, and she looked thoughtfully after the vanishing harpies. "I'll fix you," she lisped.

It came to pass that the maiden Clare, growing to young womanhood, worked harder than any maiden in the land, and she grew so increasingly beautiful that the lesser maidens invented a salutation for her, which was "Work seems to agree with you, dear." When they said that, Clare would gaze at them

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and reply, "You're nothing but a pack of disappointed witches, you lesser maidens, you." And the lesser maidens, observing the dangerous glow that darted from the wide blue eyes, the lightning that issued from the rosebud mouth, the rigid insult regularly delivered by means of an ethereal upward glance and a flowerlike gesture of the hand, would shake their heads and marvel. "It is like taking candor from a baby," they said.

The threat against witches is one which Clare Boothe, as a playwright and as a politician, has abundantly carried out. In her first successful play, *The Women*, she tied up her own sex crisply in cellophane and delivered it to the ashcan. *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* contributed a caricature of Southern womanhood. *Margin for Error* presented a sympathetic character in the wife of the Nazi consul, but Miss Boothe considers that this character is, like Mary Haines in *The Women* (the only other admirable woman she has depicted), a fathead. In her personal war against women perhaps her deftest weapon is the careless comment, the light and maddening dismissal. During her campaign for nomination as Congresswoman from Connecticut, in 1942, a rival Republican candidate was Miss Vivien Kellems, a manufacturer of cable grips from Westport. In a ringingly unfortunate statement to the press Miss Kellems said, "Everyone talks of Clare Boothe's sex appeal. Nobody mentions mine. But I have been working fifteen years and I couldn't have stayed that long on sex appeal. I would be very mad if anyone said I was using sex appeal." When reporters asked Miss Boothe for a retort, she remarked merely, "What's the matter with that wild-eyed little woman anyway?" Miss Kellems lost the nomination and returned to her factory and to a brief subsequent flare of notoriety as a conscientious tax objector. Miss Boothe was elected by a plurality of 6,439 votes over Leroy Downs, the Democratic incumbent. With the election won, she sighed, smiled, uttered a brief "Whew!" and took a train to Hollywood, to work out a picture contract before Congress convened in December.

In the ten months between February and December 1942, Clare Boothe travelled some 75,000 miles through Africa, India, Burma, and China as foreign correspondent for *Life*, wrote several hundred thousand words about her trip for the magazine, came home and carried on her campaign for election to Congress, made the trip to Hollywood and wrote a picture about China (which has not yet been released), and returned to Washington to take office as fresh as a rose. This program, which would have shattered almost any other woman, is an example of her remarkable capacity for getting things done. Two years earlier, as a sort of warming-up exercise, she had written *Europe in the Spring*, a book about the war, in five weeks. The speed with which she turns out her plays is so familiar to her friends that one of them, thinking up ways to kill half an hour with a companion after lunch said, "Well, if we were Clare Boothe, we could write a play." Miss Boothe is active and efficient socially as the wife

of Henry R. Luce, editor in chief of *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune*, and as the mistress of four homes — an apartment in the Waldorf Towers in New York, a house in Greenwich, Connecticut, a plantation in Monck's Corner, near Charleston, South Carolina, and an apartment in the Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, which her husband shares when he can. Her most widely discussed quality is her beauty, which she spends little time on, except for an occasional visit to a Du Barry Salon, where she stands on her head and does many interesting exercises. Other women writers have been fair to look on, but only to the degree that surprises people into saying, "She's very good-looking for a writer," in much the same way that a certain bird-hater once remarked of a canary, "It sings well, for a canary." Miss Boothe's looks are compelling enough to establish even a writer as a beauty. She is blonde, with a complexion that is actually pearl-like and a face that is saved from too angelic a cast by a strong, handsome nose and rather heavy, straight eyebrows. Her eyes are blue, translucent, and bland; her voice is musical; and her laughter is frequent and charming. She always looks so cool and delectable that a Frenchman, describing her, once said, "It is a beautiful façade, well constructed but without central heating."

People who know Clare Boothe well realize that the clear beauty of her face, the straight regard of her limpid eyes, and the light, high laughter with which she punctuates her conversation conceal nothing sinister. She is exactly what she seems to be — an amused, tolerant, unusually good-looking woman who has, perhaps, a blind spot in her perceptions. She writes vitriolic plays about vicious people not from any conviction that vice is wrong but because she honestly sees most people as bitches, two-timers, and phonies. Virtue neither bores nor interests her. It is simply an improbable quality that she has not yet investigated. She admits, with a schoolgirl giggle, that she finds vice more intriguing. "Intriguing" is a word she uses often, and it emphasizes the remarkable youthfulness of her manner and appearance when she talks. More than one woman, chatting with Miss Boothe, has been suddenly and strangely reminded of her boarding school days when the girls would gather to whisper and chuckle after lights-out. Miss Boothe's talk is naturally less innocent than dormitory chatter, but it has the same disarming qualities of wonder and unceasing astonishment. "Clare is the most unsophisticated darling in the world," a woman friend once warmly declared. "I mean, most of us are used to the fact that a lot of people are louses, but Clare never fails to get a kick out of it."

People who are fond of Miss Boothe consider that, for one so ingenuous, she has attracted an excessive amount of vitriol to herself. These allies are constantly being called on to defend her, and they like to tell how eagerly they respond, but sometimes their loyalty finds unfortunate expression. "Mind you, I *like* Clare," a champion will remark sincerely, "and it simply enrages me to hear people say that she dyes her hair and doesn't write her own plays." Miss Boothe doesn't dye her hair, and she does write her own plays, but those two

rumors — like most rumors about her — are the kind that are difficult to deny without strengthening. The oblique support of Miss Boothe's friends is hardly less deadly than the killing attack of her enemies. At a dinner in Hollywood, at which Dorothy Parker was present, Miss Boothe's name was mentioned, and a woman friend of hers at the table found herself in the familiar, bristling position of defense. She spoke at length of Miss Boothe's generosity, of the way she often helped less gifted people with money and with letters of introduction to her own influential acquaintances, and she ended, not too happily, by declaring, "Clare Boothe is always kind to her inferiors." Mrs. Parker looked up wanly. "And where," she inquired, "does she find them?"

Mrs. Parker's disinclination for Miss Boothe is said to have sprung from the familiar but apocryphal incident of the two ladies' happening to enter a restaurant at the same time, several years ago. "Age before beauty," said Miss Boothe to Mrs. Parker, according to this tale. "And pearls before swine," Mrs. Parker replied, sweeping ahead. Probably Mrs. Parker shares the distrust felt by many writers of the sweat-and-struggle school when they hear about Miss Boothe's fine, free, glowing, and effortless gift of composition. Miss Boothe writes with a pencil on manuscript paper bound into morocco covers, and she can write anywhere at any time, with such facility that the words fairly leap past each other onto the paper. She wrote the first draft of *The Women* in three days, mostly sitting up in bed in her Towers suite at the Waldorf, wearing a pink velvet bed jacket and a blue satin bow in her hair. *The Women* was played in eighteen countries and in ten languages, and it earned about \$300,000 net in royalties for Miss Boothe. Such statistics may impress the writer who spends a month or two perfecting one short story or one article that will sell for some \$299,000 less than Miss Boothe has made out of *The Women*, but they do not make him love Miss Boothe. There is something dilettante and infuriating to him in the pretty picture of the Muse in spats crashing the Waldorf, and he is deaf to the redeeming fact that Miss Boothe works harder than most authors at rewriting. Max Gordon, who produced *The Women*, once said, "When one of Clare's plays goes into rehearsal, that is the time I would like to break both of Clare's wrists. You give her a suggestion about changing a line, and what does she do? She goes away for a little while and comes back with a whole new act." Voluminous production is an important feature of literature to Miss Boothe, and she has no patience with unprolific writers. Once, speaking of a noted woman poet, she said, "Why all the fuss about her? What has she done in fifty years except produce four or five slim vols. of poetry?" Since the noted woman poet was precisely forty-three years old when the remark got back to her, it may have been the carelessly inserted phrase rather than the critical comment that caused one more coolness between Miss Boothe and a fellow member of her craft. Miss Boothe is frank about her own age; she is forty-one, and admits it. "I have never heard Clare lie about her age," one female admirer

said recently to another. "Neither have I," the other agreed, and after a moment's reflection added, "How old did she tell *you* she was?"

This curious doubletalk, in which every boost is a knock, enmeshes even people who sincerely like and respect Miss Boothe. Helplessly, they find that they always have a bad word for her. It may be due to her remarkable gift for bringing out the worst in people, or it may be the result of an unacknowledged spark of envy that is apt to nag at the most unenvious when they are confronted with the spectacle of a woman who has everything, and has it all in superlatives. Scarcely any woman is bothered by another being more beautiful than herself, by a second being more talented, or by a third being more successful, but when beauty, talent, and success are all three extravagantly embodied in one woman, it is sometimes more than the girls can take. They find it hard, too, to forgive Miss Boothe's flawless ability to do almost anything. One time, at a weekend party on Long Island, the other guests were gathered around the swimming pool when Clare appeared, slim and dazzling in a white bathing suit. "Let's see you do a swan dive, dear," said one of the women nastily, thinking she had at last touched on the impossible. Miss Boothe put on her cap, made a perfect swan dive from the high board, swam the length of the pool in an expert, easy crawl, climbed out gracefully, and sat down to talk to the men. She is too intelligent to be unconscious of her own extraordinary gifts, but it is not true that she considers herself superior to other people, and she is impatient with loftiness in anyone else. A friend of the Luces who visits them often says that one of the few quarrels that ever took place in their home life occurred one evening when Luce remarked that he could not think of anybody who was mentally his superior. His wife felt that this sentiment was extreme, and argued with him hotly and in vain, bringing in the names of Einstein (who, Luce objected, is a specialist) and John Kieran (a freak, said Luce). After nine years of marriage, Luce has finally convinced his wife that he invariably means what he says, and sometimes it worries her.

Clare Boothe's most conspicuous virtue is a fine willingness to accept any challenge, and her life has been full of double dares. Christened Ann Clare, she was the only daughter of an obscure couple who at the time of her birth were living in a flat on upper Riverside Drive. Her mother, Ann Snyder, was a pretty daughter of Bavarian immigrants and had been a chorus girl in one or two musical comedies before her marriage to William Boothe. Boothe was a minister's son, an amateur violinist, and an executive of the Boothe Piano Company in New York. Through her father, Clare is distantly related to the Maryland Booths, the family which included Edwin and John Wilkes Booth. After John Wilkes Booth assassinated Lincoln, the Maryland Booths added an "e" to their name in an effort to dissociate themselves from the murderer. Through this relationship, Clare Boothe is probably eligible to such societies

as the Ark and Dove and the D.A.R., but she has not yet got around to applying for membership. Until now, Miss Boothe's connection with the Maryland Booths has been little more than another poisoned dart in the winged exchange that goes on between Clare and almost all other women. Not long ago, Miss Boothe, speaking of the happy and wildly fertile marriage of a friend who was then expecting her fifth child, said lightly, "That marriage is what you might call an *enceinte cordiale*." When this crack was dutifully reported to the busy wife and mother, she murmured, "Ah yes, Clare Wilkes Boothe."

When Clare was eight, William Boothe wearied of the piano business and left his family to be a professional violinist, announcing himself, when he could get a job in music halls or restaurants, as Billy Boothe, the Irish Fiddler. He never resumed formal relations with his wife and daughter, and Mrs. Boothe eventually divorced him, some time before his death in California thirteen years ago. After the departure of the Irish Fiddler, money was scarce, and Clare and her mother went to live with a friend of Mrs. Boothe's, an actress who had a two-room flat on Columbus Avenue. Miss Boothe now speaks of those days with a musing expression and a dramatist's forcefulness. She will describe to you vividly the garbage cans that cluttered the hallway and the night a mouse got in her bed and she ran screaming from her cubbyhole of a bedroom into the next room, which her mother shared with their hostess. It is certainly true that Clare and her mother had almost no money until Mrs. Boothe, reading an article about Mary Pickford one day, glanced at her daughter's golden hair and sweet, cerulean gaze and decided that what Mary Pickford could do, Clare could do. The decision eventually became a motto which has shaped Clare Boothe's whole life, although the name of Mary Pickford has been replaced at intervals by Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt's, say, by George Bernard Shaw's, and perhaps by Daniel Webster's or William Pitt's. Through her theatrical friends, Mrs. Boothe got Clare a job as understudy to Mary Pickford, who was then starring in *A Good Little Devil* under the direction of David Belasco, and also succeeded in having her tested for a part in a movie starring Viola Dana, which was being made at Fort Lee, New Jersey. Clare never played Mary Pickford's role in *A Good Little Devil*, but in the light of what happened at Fort Lee, it might have been interesting if she had. The movie test required Viola Dana and Clare Boothe, representing two orphans, to stand together hand in hand and register anxiety, fright, fear, and finally horror. When the camera began to grind, Viola Dana went into her act. Tears trembled from her dewy eyes, her lips quivered, her childish hands curved in alarm and then pushed at the air as though repelling some loathsome thing. Throughout this performance, Clare surveyed Miss Dana with a dead pan, her arms folded, her eyes critical. She was fired, but later returned for a child's part in a Marie Doro picture and also appeared briefly on Broadway in a play called *The Dummy*, starring Ernest Truex. Her stage name was Joyce Fair.

No woman is more triumphant than the mother of a successful child actress, and the mother of a child actress who has not quite made good is apt to be correspondingly depressed. As Clare's career wavered, Mrs. Boothe came to a quick decision. She had heard that you could bring up a child in Europe economically and in a manner worthy of one connected with the Maryland Booths, whose traditions of gentility she cherished. With what money she had, she gambled in stocks on a tip from a friend and made about \$2,000. In 1913, she and Clare, who was ten, sailed for France. For the next year the two led the frugal lives of impoverished gentlewomen, in a small hotel in Paris. The war and the fact that their capital was dwindling drove them back to America in 1914, and soon Mrs. Boothe fell ill and was removed to a hospital in Greenwich for an emergency operation. The surgeon who attended her was Dr. A. E. Austin, a local physician, and a year or so after her recovery Mrs. Boothe married him. The couple took up housekeeping in Sound Beach, and Clare was placed in the Castle School in Tarrytown. Until then, her only formal schooling had been a year at St. Mary's school in Garden City, since her mother was too proud to send her to public school in New York and not prosperous enough to afford private establishments. At St. Mary's, Clare formed her first friendship with another girl, Elizabeth ("Buff") Cobb, Irvin Cobb's daughter, and she also learned her first lesson in womanly warfare. A boy had asked Buff to go to a prom at his military school, and Buff, who was — and is — dark-haired and vivacious, told him lightly that she would let him know. In the meantime, the boy, to make sure of a good-looking date, asked Clare to go if Buff couldn't. It appears that Buff waited too long to give him his answer, so he took Clare. Buff then wrote Clare a letter that said in part, "You are a cold, scheming, unscrupulous woman," and the rift between them lasted for some ten years, until one day on the beach at Southampton, after Clare had married her first husband, George Brokaw, and Buff had married Frank Chapman, the baritone, the girls happened to come out of adjoining bathhouses at the same time. Each was carrying a wet bathing suit and a wet towel. "Clare, darling!" Buff cried, and "Buff, darling!" cried Clare. "What was that row about anyway?" Buff demanded. "I wouldn't know," said Clare, and they tearfully flung their wet suits and towels around each other's shoulders and made up then and there. They have remained good friends, and several years ago, between their respective divorces and remarriages (Buff is now Mrs. Cobb Rogers), they travelled through Europe and part of Africa together. The trip was a success, with only an occasional breath of friction, caused by the fact that Buff likes to leave books and other belongings cozily flung around a room or a ship's cabin, while Clare is so passionately neat that she cannot abide even an ashtray out of place.

After Clare graduated from the Castle School, she went to live in Sound Beach with her mother and stepfather, but she soon rebelled against suburban

life, and with a fairly dramatic gesture. With ten dollars she had saved, she ran away to New York, took a room in a boarding house, and got a job at Dennison's, making nut cups and bonbon holders out of frilled paper at a salary of eighteen dollars a week. The child actress Joyce Fair had long been forgotten, but Clare found a certain drama in pseudonyms; as a factory girl, she worked under the name of Jacqueline Tanner. Toward the end of her second month at Dennison's an attack of appendicitis obliged her to go home to Sound Beach — somewhat to her relief, she now admits. While she was recovering from the appendix operation, she decided that she wanted to be an actress again. Mrs. Austin, who had settled nicely into the role of a Sound Beach matron, was opposed to that notion, but she finally agreed to let Clare take lessons at Clare Tree Major's School of the Theatre in New York.

Mrs. Major now speaks proudly of Miss Boothe as a former pupil, but their relations were not always so placid. When Clare entered the school, she was apple-cheeked and plump, with long, fair hair, and Mrs. Major, who apparently liked her pupils to do things the hard way, kept putting a black wig on her and telling her to be a geisha girl. To Clare, who had a logical mind, this seemed freakishly bad casting, and her annoyance reached its climax on the day of the students' first public performance. On that occasion each pupil was called onto the stage, before an audience of distinguished guests and professional critics, and told to draw a slip of paper from a bowl. The pupil was to read aloud, and then act out, whatever assignment was written on the slip of paper. Most of the pupils drew simple tasks, such as "You have just been told that your lover has been killed" or "You are a girl receiving a proposal of marriage which you gently decline." When Clare saw her assignment, however, she was stunned. "You are a cave man," it read, "and your whelps are starving. You go out and slaughter an animal for food, drag the carcass home, and you and your family eat it." Baffled but game, Clare squared her elbows, planted her feet wide apart, twisted her pretty face into a savage snarl, and, rocking from side to side in a bloodthirsty manner, uttered a piercing growl. The audience collapsed into helpless laughter, and Clare, dropping the cave man role, announced clearly, "This whole thing is unreasonable," and walked off the stage. Miss Boothe sometimes tells about this incident these days, and when she does, she likes to act out the cave man, crouching, swaying, and growling. She can do it pretty well, now.

After this performance, Mrs. Major intimated to Clare that the acting laurels of the Boothe family had better rest with Edwin and John Wilkes, and, in 1919, Clare took a trip to Europe with her mother and Dr. Austin, who wanted to study plastic surgery, which had come into prominence as a result of the war. The late Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont was a fellow passenger on the return voyage to America, and she took such a fancy to Clare that, back in New York, she encouraged her in fashionable pursuits, which included going to church



to hear Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick preach. One Sunday, after service, the James Stewart Cushmans introduced George T. Brokaw to Miss Boothe. George Brokaw had inherited a fortune from his father, Isaac Vail Brokaw, one of the founders of the men's clothing firm of Brokaw Brothers. He and Clare Boothe were married on August 10, 1923, when she was twenty years old and he was forty-three. Clare's mother was pleased by the marriage, and from that time took a quiet pride in her daughter's increasing social brilliance. Mrs. Austin died in a motor accident six years ago. Dr. Austin, who now lives in Greenwich, served a term in Congress, from 1938 to 1940, as representative from Connecticut — the office his stepdaughter was to hold later.

People who met young Mrs. Brokaw at the time of her marriage have since described her as naive and, in a way, winsome. "She wore flowers in her hair when nobody else did, if you know what I mean," one woman says, "and she was always saying she wanted to have six babies." One child, Ann, was born of the marriage. Last year Ann, aged nineteen, was killed in an automobile crash on her way back to college after a Christmas vacation spent with her mother. Recalling the tragic and strangely identical deaths of her mother and her daughter, other women are less inclined to envy Miss Boothe these days.

The Brokaws lived in the Brokaw town house, on Fifth Avenue at the corner of Seventy-ninth Street — a gloomy mansion which the bride tried to enliven by a series of dinner parties and masquerade balls. Her efforts were hampered by the fact that she baffled the women she came to know in her new role of Fifth Avenue matron. They were simple, good-hearted society women, intent upon the business of life, which was, for them, home, servants, children, entertaining, and keeping abreast of other people's business. They discovered with concern that Mrs. Brokaw was not interested in the details of housekeeping or of cuisine. They will tell you that in the Brokaw house neither was of the best. Mrs. Brokaw had a way of speaking, too, which puzzled these ladies. A witty feminine dinner guest, for example, who had prattled entertainingly at the table, felt less than rewarded when Clare said to her later, in a tone of incredulous surprise, "Darling, you were really *amusing* tonight!" Women could not decide whether such a crack was naive or somehow double-edged. It's a good guess that it was naive, and that Miss Boothe eventually allowed her comments to be interpreted as murderous in much the same way that a comedienne, seeing that a fumbled line pleases an audience, keeps it in the act.

Her marriage to Brokaw ended in divorce in 1929, and she received a settlement of \$425,000. She returned to New York from Reno, rich, independent, and insecure. As Mrs. Boothe Brokaw, she had an uncertain social standing, few intimate friends, and nothing special to do. Brokaw soon married a Miss Frances Seymour, who is now Mrs. Henry Fonda of Hollywood; he died in 1935. In 1929, with her five-year-old daughter, of whom she had part-time custody, a governess, and three servants, Clare Boothe Brokaw moved into a

penthouse apartment on Beekman Place. She had sometimes thought she would like to write, but she had completed only two one-act plays, which were never presented; one was called *The Lily Maid* and the other was a grim sketch about a man in prison. Her main connection with playwrighting was a photograph of George Bernard Shaw, whom she had not met, which she kept reverently on her dressing table. Miss Boothe likes to tell about her eventual meeting with Shaw in 1939, when she had gone to London with her husband, Henry Luce, for the opening of *The Women*. Impressed by the fact that Shaw had consented to see her, and remembering his picture on the dressing table at home, she said breathlessly, "Oh, Mr. Shaw, if it weren't for you I wouldn't *be* here!" Shaw said "Oh," and then, nodding understandingly, added, "Let me see what was your dear mother's name?" What pleased Miss Boothe even more was the postcard Shaw sent her a few days later. "Kindest regards to you and Mr. Boothe," he had written on it. . . .

#### QUESTIONS

1. What purposes does the fairy-tale introduction serve? Does it give any false impressions, later corrected, of Clare Boothe's life? What obstacles did she face?
2. What was her attitude toward women and theirs toward her? Give illustrations.
3. On what famous street did she live after her marriage to Brokaw?
4. Do you like, or admire, Clare Boothe after reading this piece?
5. What are some advantages and disadvantages of the *New Yorker* profile type of wit in a biographical sketch?

*Winston Churchill, English statesman-hero of World War II, is the author of outstanding historical and biographical works (Marlborough, 1938; The Second World War, 1948-54, A History of the English-speaking Peoples, 1956, etc.) and winner of the Nobel Prize for literature.*

Mr. Bernard Shaw was one of my earliest antipathies. Indeed, almost my first literary effusion, written when I was serving as a subaltern in India in 1897 (it never saw the light of day), was a ferocious onslaught upon him, and upon an article which he had written disparaging and deriding the British Army in some minor war. Four or five years passed before I made his acquaintance. My mother, always in agreeable contact with artistic and dramatic circles, took me to luncheon with him. I was instantly attracted by the sparkle and gaiety of his conversation, and impressed by his eating only fruit and vegetables, and drinking only water. I rallied him on the latter habit, asking: 'Do you really never drink any wine at all?' 'I am hard enough to keep in order as it is,' he replied. Perhaps he had heard of my youthful prejudice against him.

In later years, and especially after the war, I can recall several pleasant and, to me, memorable talks on politics, particularly about Ireland and about Socialism. I think these encounters cannot have been displeasing to him, for he was kind enough to give me a copy of this *Magnum Opus*, 'The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism,' remarking (subsequently and erroneously), 'It is a sure way to prevent you reading it.' At any rate, I possess a lively image of this bright, nimble, fierce, and comprehending being, Jack Frost, dancing bespangled in the sunshine, which I should be very sorry to lose. . . .

One of his biographers, Edward Shanks, says of Bernard Shaw: 'It is more important to remember that he began to flourish in the 'nineties, than to remember that he was born in Ireland'; and it is true that Irish influences are only found in him by those who are determined to find them. The influence of the 'nineties, on the other hand, is strong — not the pale influence of the decadents, but the eager impulsion of the New Journalism, the New Political Movements, the New Religious Movement. All the bubbling and conceit of New Movements (in capitals) took hold of him. For nine years he had been living in London under the pinch of poverty and the sharper twinges of success denied. His snuff-colored suit, his hat turned (for some obscure economy) back to front, his black coat blending slowly into green, were becoming gradually known. But in all these years he only earned, he says, £6, of which £5 were for an adver-

From *Great Contemporaries*, by Winston Churchill. Copyright, 1937, by Winston Churchill. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

tisement. Otherwise he depended on his mother, and wrote, unrecompensed, a few mediocre novels. He was still so obscure that he had to arrest and startle even in the very first sentence of his articles. Jobs slowly came in — musical criticism, dramatic criticism, political squibs and paragraphs, but it was not until 1892 that his first play, *Widowers' Houses*, appeared.

His early years in Ireland had given him a loathing of respectability and religion — partly because they were the fashionable butts of youth in those days, and Shaw has always been a child of that age; and partly because his family, either in an effort to be worthy of their position as cousins of a baronet or to counteract their poverty, dutifully upheld them both. Being dragged to Low Church and Chapel, and forbidden to play with the tradesmen's children, gave him strong complexes from which he has never recovered, and made him utter loud outcries against 'custom-made morality,' against the tame conformity of the genteel; in short, against all that is nowadays summed up by what Mr. Kipling called 'the fatted soul of things.' When at length he emerged, it was as a herald of revolt, a disconcerter of established convictions, a merry, mischievous, rebellious Puck, posing the most awkward riddles of the Sphinx.

This energetic, groping, angry man of about thirty, poor, the author of some unsuccessful novels and of some slashing criticisms, with a good knowledge of music and painting, and a command of the high lights of indignation, meets in middle age Henry George, and at once joins the Fabian Society with eager enthusiasm. He speaks at hotels, and at street corners. He conquers his nervousness. He colors his style with a debating tinge which comes out in every preface to his plays. In 1889 he shows for the first time a little Marxian influence. Later on he throws Marx over for Mr. Sidney Webb, whom he has always acknowledged to have had more influence than anyone in forming his opinions. But these sources are not enough; something must be found to replace religion as a binding force and a director. Mr. Shanks says: 'All his life he has suffered under a handicap, which is that he is shy of using . . . the name of God, yet cannot find any proper substitute.' Therefore he must invent the Life-Force, must twist the Saviour into a rather half-hearted Socialist, and establish Heaven in his own political image.

'Fine Art,' declares our hero in another foray, 'is the only teacher, except torture.' As usual, however, with his doctrines, he does not submit himself to this master's discipline. He never trifles with unprofitable concerns, and a few years later he writes: "All my attempts at Art for Art's sake broke down; it was like hammering 10d. nails into sheets of notepaper.' His versatile taste leads him to associate himself with Schopenhauer, Shelley, Goethe, Morris, and other diverse guides. In a moment when his critical faculty is evidently slumbering, he even ranks William Morris with Goethe!

Meanwhile he continues to attract all the attention he can. 'I leave,' he says in *Diabolonian Ethics*, 'the delicacies of retirement to those who are gentlemen

first and literary workmen afterwards. The cart and trumpet for me'; and the trumpet being used to arouse and shock, sends forth a quantity of bombinating nonsense such as (in the *Quintessence of Ibsenism*): 'There are just as good reasons for burning a heretic at the stake as for rescuing a ship-wrecked crew from drowning; in fact, there are better.'

It was not until the late 'nineties that real, live, glowing success came, and henceforth took up her abode with Mr. Bernard Shaw. At decent intervals, and with growing assurance, his plays succeeded one another. *Candida*, *Major Barbara*, and *Man and Superman* riveted the attention of the intellectual world. Into the void left by the annihilation of Wilde he stepped armed with a keener wit, a tenser dialogue, a more challenging theme, a stronger construction, a deeper and a more natural comprehension. The characteristics and the idiosyncrasies of the Shavian drama are world-renowned. His plays are today more frequently presented, not only within the wide frontiers of the English language, but throughout the world, than those of any man but Shakespeare. All parties and every class, in every country, have pricked up their ears at their coming, and welcomed their return.

The plays were startling enough on their first appearance. Ibsen had broken the 'well-made play' by making it better than ever: Mr. Shaw broke it by not 'making' it at all. He was once told that Sir James Barrie had completely worked out the plot of *Shall We Join the Ladies* before he began to write. Mr. Shaw was scandalized. 'Fancy knowing how a play is to end before you begin it! When I start a play I haven't the slightest idea of what is going to happen.' His other main innovation was to depend for his drama not on the interplay of character and character, or of character and circumstance, but on that of argument and argument. His ideas become personages, and fight among themselves, sometimes with intense dramatic effect, and sometimes not. His human beings, with a few exceptions, are there for what they are to say, not for what they are to be or do. Yet they live.

Recently I took my children to *Major Barbara*. Twenty years had passed since I had seen it. They were the most terrific twenty years the world has known. Almost every human institution had undergone decisive change. The landmarks of centuries had been swept away. Science has transformed the conditions of our lives and the aspect of town and country. Silent social evolution, violent political change, a vast broadening of the social foundations, an immeasurable release from convention and restraint, a profound reshaping of national and individual opinion, have followed the trampling march of this tremendous epoch. But in *Major Barbara* there was not a character requiring to be redrawn, not a sentence nor a suggestion that was out of date. My children were astounded to learn that this play, the very acme of modernity, was written more than five years before they were born.

Few people practice what they preach, and no one less so than Mr. Bernard Shaw. Few are more capable of having the best of everything both ways. His spiritual home is no doubt in Russia; his native land is the Irish Free State; but he lives in comfortable England. His dissolvent theories of life and society have been sturdily banished from his personal conduct and his home. No one has ever led a more respectable life or been a stronger seceder from his own subversive imagination. He derides the marriage vow and even at times the sentiment of love itself; yet no one is more happily or wisely married. He indulges in all the liberties of an irresponsible Chatterbox, babbling gloriously from dawn to dusk, and at the same time advocates the abolition of Parliamentary institutions and the setting up of an Iron Dictatorship, of which he would probably be the first victim. It is another case for John Morley's comment upon Carlyle, 'the Gospel of silence in thirty volumes by Mr. Wordy.' He prattles agreeably with the tame English Socialists, and preens himself with evident satisfaction in the smiles alike of Stalin or Mussolini. He promulgates in stern decree that all incomes should be equalized and that anyone who has more than another is guilty — unconsciously perhaps — of personal meanness, if not fraud; he has always preached the ownership of all forms of wealth by the State; yet when the Lloyd George Budget imposed for the first time the slender beginnings of the Super-tax, no one made a louder squawk than this already wealthy Fabian. He is at once an acquisitive capitalist and a sincere Communist. He makes his characters talk blithely about killing men for the sake of an idea; but would take great trouble not to hurt a fly.

He seems to derive equal pleasure from all these contrary habits, poses and attitudes. He has laughed his sparkling way through life, exploding by his own acts or words every argument he has ever used on either side of any question, teasing and bewildering every public he has addressed, and involving in his own mockery every cause he has ever championed. The world has long watched with tolerance and amusement the nimble antics and gyrations of this unique and double-headed chameleon, while all the time the creature was eager to be taken seriously.

\* \* \* \* \*

I expect that the jesters who played so invaluable a part in the Courts of the Middle Ages saved their skins from being flayed and their necks from being wrung by the impartiality with which their bladder-blows were bestowed in all directions, and upon all alike. Before one potentate or notable could draw his sword to repay a scathing taunt, he was convulsed with laughter at the condition in which his rival or companion was left. Everyone was so busy rubbing his own shins that none had time to kick the kicker. Thus the jester survived; thus he gained access to the most formidable circles, and indulged in antics of freedom under the dumfounded gaze of barbarism and tyranny.

The Shavian cow — to change the illustration — has no sooner yielded its

record milking than it kicks the pail over the thirsty and admiring milker. He pays an incomparable tribute to the work of the Salvation Army, and leaves it a few minutes later ridiculous and forlorn. In *John Bull's Other Island* we are no sooner captivated by Irish charm and atmosphere than we see the Irish race liveried in humbug and strait-jacketed in infirmity of purpose. The Liberal Home Ruler, who so hopefully expected from Bernard Shaw, justification and approval for his cause, found himself in a trice held up as an object of satire rarely equaled upon the stage. The intense emotions aroused in our breasts by the trial and martyrdom of Joan of Arc are immediately effaced by the harlequinade which constitutes the final act. 'The Red Flag,' the international hymn of the Labour Party, is dubbed by this most brilliant of Socialist intellectuals 'the burial march of a monkey.' His most serious work on Socialism, a masterly piece of reasoning, the embodiment of the most solid convictions of Bernard Shaw's long and varied experience, a contribution to our thought upon which three whole years, sufficient to produce half a dozen famous plays, were lavished, is read with profit and amusement by capitalist society and banned by Labour politicians.

Everyone has been excoriated, every idea has been rattled, and everything goes on the same as before. We are in the presence of a thinker, original, suggestive, profound; but a thinker who depends on contradiction, and deals out thought as it flashes upon his mind without troubling about its relation to what he has said before, or its results upon the conviction of others. Yet, and it is the essence of the paradox, no one can say that Bernard Shaw is not at heart sincere, or that his life's message has not been consistent.

Certainly, we are all the better for having had the Jester in our midst.

\* \* \* \* \*

I was diverted some years ago by the accounts which were published of his excursion to Russia. For his co-delegate or comrade in the trip he selected Lady Astor. The choice was happy and appropriate. Lady Astor, like Mr. Bernard Shaw, enjoys the best of all worlds. She reigns on both sides of the Atlantic in the Old World and the New, at once as a leader of fashionable society, and of advanced feminist democracy. She combines a kindly heart with a sharp and wagging tongue. She embodies the historical portent of the first woman Member of the House of Commons. She denounces the vice of gambling in unmeasured terms, and is closely associated with an almost unrivaled racing stable. She accepts Communist hospitality and flattery, and remains the Conservative member for Plymouth. She does all these opposite things so well and so naturally that the public, tired of criticizing, can only gape.

'It is now some sixteen or seventeen years ago,' to parody Burke's famous passage, 'that I first saw the present Viscountess Astor in London society, and surely never lighted on these shores, which she scarcely seemed to touch, a more

delightful vision.' She had stepped out of a bandbox from the United States to animate and charm the merry and still decorous circles through which she had then begun to move. Every door opened at her approach. Insular and masculine prejudices were swept aside, and forthwith the portals of the House of Commons, barred by immemorial tradition to women, always difficult of access to those of foreign birth, were thrown wide to receive her. In a trice she was escorted to her seat by Mr. Balfour and Mr. Lloyd George, was soon delivering her maiden speech, and offering a picture of the memorable scene to be preserved in the Palace of Westminster. These are indeed startling achievements.

It must have been with some trepidation that the chiefs of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics awaited the arrival in their grim domains of a merry harlequinade. The Russians have always been fond of circuses and traveling shows. Since they had imprisoned, shot or starved most of their best comedians, their visitors might fill for a space a noticeable void. And here was the World's most famous intellectual Clown and Pantaloon in one, and the charming Columbine of the capitalist pantomime. So the crowds were marshaled. Multitudes of well-drilled demonstrators were served out with their red scarves and flags. The massed-bands blared. Loud cheers from sturdy proletarians rent the welkin. The nationalized railways produced their best accommodation. Commissar Lunacharsky delivered a flowery harangue. Commissar Litvinoff, unmindful of the food queues in the back-streets, prepared a sumptuous banquet; and Arch Commissar Stalin, 'the man of steel,' flung open the closely-guarded sanctuaries of the Kremlin, and pushing aside his morning's budget of death warrants, and *lettres de cachet*, received his guests with smiles of overflowing comradeship.

Ah! but we must not forget that the object of the visit was educational and investigatory. How important for our public figures to probe for themselves the truth about Russia: to find out by personal test how the Five Year Plan was working. How necessary to know whether Communism is really better than Capitalism, and how the broad masses of the Russian people fare in 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' under the new regime. Who can grudge a few days devoted to these arduous tasks? To the aged Jester, with his frosty smile and safely-invested capital, it was a brilliant opportunity of dropping a series of disconcerting bricks upon the corns of his ardent hosts. And to Lady Astor whose husband, according to the newspapers, had the week before been awarded three millions sterling returned taxation by the American Courts, all these communal fraternizings and sororizings must have been a pageant of delight. But it is the brightest hours that flash away the fastest.

If I have dwelt upon the comical aspects of these scenes it is to draw a serious moral. Well was it said that the genius of comedy and tragedy are essentially the same. In Russia we have a vast, dumb people dwelling under the discipline



of a conscripted army in war-time; a people suffering in years of peace the rigors and privations of the worst campaigns; a people ruled by terror, fanaticisms, and the Secret Police. Here we have a state whose subjects are so happy, that they have to be forbidden to quit its bounds under the direst penalties; whose diplomatists and agents sent on foreign missions, have often to leave their wives and children at home as hostages to ensure their eventual return. Here we have a system whose social achievements crowd five or six persons in a single room; whose wages hardly compare in purchasing power with the British dole: where life is unsafe; where liberty is unknown; where grace and culture are dying; and where armaments and preparations for war are rife. Here is a land where God is blasphemed, and man, plunged in this world's misery, is denied the hope of mercy on both sides of the grave — his soul in the striking, protesting phrase of Robespierre, 'no more than a genial breeze dying away at the mouth of the tomb!' Here we have a power actively and ceaselessly engaged in trying to overturn existing civilizations by stealth, by propaganda, and when it dares, by bloody force. Here we have a state, three millions of whose citizens are languishing in foreign exile, whose intelligentsia have been methodically destroyed; a state nearly half a million of whose citizens, reduced to servitude for their political opinions, are rotting and freezing through the Arctic night; toiling to death in forests, mines and quarries, many for no more than indulging in that freedom of thought which has gradually raised man above the beast.

Decent, good-hearted British men and women ought not to be so airily detached from realities, that they have no word of honest indignation for such wantonly, callously-inflicted pain.

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If the truth must be told, our British island has not had much help in its troubles from Mr. Bernard Shaw. When nations are fighting for life, when the Palace in which the Jester dwells not uncomfortably, is itself assailed, and everyone from Prince to groom is fighting on the battlements, the Jester's jokes echo only through deserted halls, and his witticisms and commendations, distributed evenly between friend and foe, jar the ears of hurrying messengers, of mourning women and wounded men. The titter ill accords with the tocsin, or the motley with the bandages. But these trials are over; the island is safe, the world is quiet, and begins again to be free. Time for self-questioning returns; and wit and humor in their embroidered mantles take again their seats at a replenished board. The ruins are rebuilt; a few more harvests are gathered in. Fancy is liberated from her dungeon, and we can afford, thank God, to laugh again.\* Nay more, we can be proud of our famous Jester, and in regathered security rejoice that we laugh in common with many men in many lands, and thereby

\* Alas, we laughed too soon.

renew the genial and innocent comradeship and kinship of mankind. For when all is said and done, it was not the Jester's fault there was a war. Had we all stayed beguiled by his musings and his sallies, how much better off we should be! How many faces we should not have to miss! It is a source of pride to any nation to have nursed one of those recording sprites who can illuminate to the eye of remote posterity many aspects of the age in which we live. Saint, sage, and clown; venerable, profound, and irrepressible, Bernard Shaw receives, if not the salutes, at least the hand-clappings of a generation which honors him as another link in the humanities of peoples, and as the greatest living master of letters in the English-speaking world.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What were the chief influences which molded Shaw's thinking?
2. What distinguishes his plays, especially his characters, from those of other dramatists?
3. What is Churchill's dominant interpretation of Shaw's character? What does he call him?
4. Did Shaw practice what he preached? Give examples.
5. What is Churchill's chief criticism of Shaw? What excuse does he make for this fault?

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION VIII

1. A great novelist, it has been said, simply "describes" appearance and gestures and "reports" conversation, to create character; he does not go in for lengthy analysis. Which of these writers follow this novelistic method in their sketches? Cite passages.
2. Which characters do you *see* most clearly, after reading these sketches? Which do you *understand* best? Should the writer of a profile aim primarily at picturing the subject or at getting inside his mind?
3. Compare the use made of anecdotes by Harriman, Sandburg, and Pyle. What different purposes are served? Why doesn't Churchill include more biographical anecdotes about Shaw?
4. Sum up in a single sentence the character of each person in this section. For which sketches is such a summary most nearly adequate? If inadequate, is it because the character is too complex, or the writer not skillful enough?
5. How does the writer's style and personality color his interpretation of his subject? Answer this question experimentally by trying to describe G. B. Shaw in Harriman's manner, or Mary Todd in Dickens', or Clare Boothe in Churchill's.
6. List the biographical facts about the subject (birthplace, family background, education, positions, etc.) in each of the last four sketches. Which sketch is most factual? How much light does this material throw on the subject's character? Compare with the least factual sketch.

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Write a self-portrait, describing your appearance, analyzing your character, and drawing a conclusion about your major traits.
2. Write a sketch of the "funny man" or girl of your campus or neighborhood, including jokes and comical actions but also a more serious trait in contrast. Why does he act like that?
3. Write up your "most unforgettable" character in the manner of the *Reader's Digest* and other magazine pieces on unusual people or people who have greatly influenced your life.

4. Write a thumbnail sketch, like Dickens', of the oddest individual you have come across, or of a favorite comic strip character. Emphasize peculiarities of appearance, speech, and action.
5. Interview a local or visiting celebrity, and write a profile, like Harriman's or Pyle's, giving behind-the-scene details of his daily life, as well as quotations.
6. Write a serious estimate, like Churchill's, of an important person on campus: influential pastor, editor, coach, student leader, college administrator, etc., with whose ideas you are not in complete agreement.
7. Write a sketch, like Sandburg's, of a minor historical character, attempting to get at the essence of his personality through description, analysis, and anecdote. Use several sources in your research.

## SECTION

# IX

## NARRATIVE

Narration is simply telling about something that has happened. "This blue convertible came tearing down the Avenue, right past the stop sign. I could see I wouldn't be able to stop in time, so I stepped on her, but he swung to the right like he was trying to cut me off. Mary yelled, and I pushed the brake pedal through the floor, and —" This is the simplest kind of narrative; if you have ever told a friend about how you won a boat race or got lost in the woods, you are an old hand at it. But how about the more complicated business of getting a story down on paper?

There's more to it than meets the eye of the casual reader. The excitement in the teller's voice must be transferred to cold type (*suspense* — imparting the feeling that something dramatic is going to take place); there must be a *point* to the narrative (the chief character, the "I" of the accident above, has in some way changed or learned from his experience); above all, the incidents that make up the happening must be connected so as to form a complete unit with a logical beginning, middle, and end — in other words, you must have a *plot*.

What, exactly, is a plot? James Reid Parker, in his theme-length "The First Day," tells how a young instructor overcame his stage fright at having to face a college class for the first time. What do we have so far, from this one sentence summary? A *chief character* with a definite *problem to solve*. That's what you want to start with; and try to introduce your chief character and his problem as promptly as Parker does: "When young Dr. Sargent arrived at the college to assume his duties as a member of the faculty, he reversed a lifelong custom. Now that he was well equipped with the suitable degrees . . . he was about to address a class. Hitherto he had always been among those addressed. . . . Sitting in one of the green chairs [in his office], Sargent nervously fiddled with his notes for the first day. He had the academic equivalent of stage fright." Six sentences, and we have a sympathetic young man face to face with a crisis.

Dr. Sargent is nervous. He tries taking his time when the bell for classes rings; tries to be casual by lighting a cigarette and sauntering inconspicuously

down the corridor. This is his first attempt to solve his problem, and what happens? A student mistakes him for a classmate and starts talking to him about "this guy Sargent" — and he is in deeper than before (*complication*).

But, in the midst of his panic, Dr. Sargent, who is really a nice guy, looks "at his friend with the upright hair" and suddenly remembers "that his own college life was only three or four years behind him, after all. It had been much like this." Then they are in the room, and the student rushes for a rear seat, expecting Sargent to follow. But Sargent must mount the platform, and, with his head buried in his classbook, call the roll — after which, he looks up and sees the student, with *his* head buried in his notebook, avoiding Sargent's eyes.

This is the *climax*. Instead of putting the class at ease, Sargent has already terribly embarrassed at least one of them. Everyone is waiting for him to speak, curious or, perhaps, hostile. Or — is "hostile" the right word for these green freshmen before him?

In talking to the student in the corridor, Sargent had had a sudden, imaginative insight into how things looked from their point of view — had remembered his own college days and his jittery feeling then at meeting a strange instructor for the first time.

" 'Gentlemen,' Sargent began, 'this — er — is my first day as a member of the faculty, and — er — if you are in any way nervous about attending a college class for the first time, you can't possibly — um — be as nervous as I am. Er — during the lecture you may smoke if you want to.' "

"Then tension relaxed. He had said the right thing."

The hero has *solved* his problem, suddenly but *plausibly*, because Sargent's ability to get outside himself and see things from someone else's point of view had already been established (*planted*) in his conversation with the student — also the fact that he is a smoker himself. If Sargent had not had that character trait, he would not have said "the right thing" and would have been off to a bad start. And if the author had not shown us that Sargent was that kind of sympathetic fellow, earlier in the story, we would not have considered the ending convincing. "If he was so nervous before, how could he think of saying something like that?" we would object.

"The First Day" also illustrates the importance of *point of view*. It is written entirely from Sargent's point of view, what is called a *single point of view technique*, which is best for most narratives. This means that the author tells us Sargent's thoughts and feelings directly (e.g., "Strange lumps were forming in his throat, and there was a hollow feeling in the pit of his stomach." . . . "Sargent . . . remembered that his own college life . . . had been much like this"); but for the other characters, we can only know what they think and feel *indirectly*, from their words or actions. For example, the student was terribly embarrassed — probably his cheeks were burning — when he saw Sargent on the platform; but we must deduce this from the sentence, "His . . . head was buried

in a notebook." Incidentally, an excellent exercise in plotting as well as in handling point of view would be to rewrite this story from the *student's* point of view; give his thoughts and feelings, give him a problem (fear of college instructors?), and let him solve it by saying or doing something tactful (after you have established tact as one of his character traits) to help Sargent over that awkward moment after roll call. And note that when the story is over, your student has learned something: the Prof is scared, too!

*Chief character, problem, complications, and solution* — there's the plot formula of most published stories. The *complications* are the successive attempts of the chief character to solve his problem, ending in success or failure (*solution*). A "short-short" (usually a story under 2500 words) like "The First Day" may have only one complication, but most stories will have several. Write from a *single point of view*. Have some *point* to the narrative (Dr. Sargent, the chief character of "The First Day," has learned the importance of sympathetic understanding in teaching). Get as much excitement and *suspense* into your writing as possible, from the structure of the plot and also from being excited about the events yourself as you write. And try to have this problem-solution structure, with a point and suspense, even if you are only writing up some experience rather than inventing a full-fledged short story. Your narrative theme will hold the class's attention much better if you do.

There are too many stories in this section for detailed analysis of all of them. But you can learn something from each of the writers here. Baldwin's "R.M.S. *Titanic*," for example, is not fiction but the kind of factual narrative you may be writing in your themes; yet it has several of the devices of fiction. Although there is no human chief character, the action centers in the ship itself, with its problem (to cross the Atlantic safely in spite of bad omens at sailing); there is conflict (man and his ship against the sea) and also irony (the passengers and crew, almost insolent in their belief that nothing could endanger their ship). Baldwin's handling of suspense is excellent. The air grows colder; message after message comes by wireless to the *Titanic*, warning of icebergs; the messages are disregarded, another ship is told by the *Titanic's* operator to "shut up," and the giant liner rushes on into the night, her speed unslackened, until "out of the dark she came, a vast, dim, white, monstrous shape." The suspense after the collision is even greater, as husbands and wives are separated at the lifeboats, the nearest ship does not hear the frantic SOS, and the icy sea rises inexorably.

Coming right after Parker's and Baldwin's, the stories by Poe, Maupassant, and O. Henry are first-rate for the study of plot, always a stumbling block to the beginning narrative writer. Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" has a clever, plausible *solution*: the murderer thinks he hears his victim's heart beating; and we accept this because, earlier in the story, while the victim was still alive, the murderer had mistaken the same sound "such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton" for a heartbeat.

The solution of O. Henry's story is plausible because the author plants Soapy's disreputable appearance at the beginning of the story, when a restaurant ejects him on the basis of his shabby trousers and shoes and general look of being a bum. The plot of Maupassant's "The Return" seems more realistic and artless (partly because of the universal point of view — the author remains outside all of his characters and simply reports words and actions); yet the conclusion, with the two husbands going off for a drink together instead of fighting, is justified by the very careful description and characterization of these fisherfolk at the beginning as shrewd, stolid, and unimaginative. All three of these stories, masterpieces though they are, make good models for narrative themes because they have simple, clearly defined plots which are carried through to a conclusion.

Of course there is more to storytelling than plotting; otherwise the mystery "whodunit" and the adventure yarn would be tops in fiction, instead of humble contenders in the basement of the league. There are, for example, the character study, like Cather's "Paul's Case," the mood study (Mansfield's "The Garden Party," Joyce's "Araby"), and the story emphasizing a philosophical theme (Conrad's "Youth," Chekhov's "The Bet").

In "Paul's Case," Willa Cather gets away with writing pages about a character, with a minimum of action, yet holds the reader's attention. How does she do it? By introducing the problem in her first sentence ("It was Paul's afternoon to appear before the faculty of the Pittsburgh High School to account for his various misdemeanors") and also, in that same first sentence, setting the stage for a dramatic scene. What's going to happen to Paul?

As the scene unfolds, Willa Cather uses very little dialogue and concentrates on the puzzling question of *why* Paul behaves as he does. She takes us through a typical day with Paul, shows him "escaping" from reality into the rich, sensuous world of concert hall and theater, and wins our sympathy for the motherless, ill-adjusted boy with his overpowering love of beauty. She then violates a cardinal rule of storytelling by summarizing, instead of dramatizing, two important scenes: Paul is cut off from the magic of music and drama by his father, and he steals the firm's money. But we don't mind, because she has succeeded in interesting us more in what goes on inside Paul than in what he does. We are taken with him to New York, to share his intoxication over the flowers, the beauty, the luxury of the Waldorf and the Opera; and the climax of the story, the impact of the news that his father has come after him to take him back to dreary Cordelia Street, is then fully developed, ending in catastrophe.

"Araby" and "The Garden Party," studies, respectively, of certain moods of an adolescent boy and an adolescent girl, are more complex. The effect of the beauty and femininity of Mangan's sister on the boy in "Araby" ("I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes"), the reasons for his disillusionment and despair at the end, in the darkened hall, are even more subtle than the emotions that stir Laura in "The Garden Party": her pride, her

joy in living, the desire and yet the fear of comprehending death. But notice that, although it is not emphasized, neither Joyce nor Mansfield can completely do without the fundamental problem-solution story structure. On the surface, Joyce's story is about a boy who wants to please a girl by buying her something at a bazaar; Mansfield's is about a girl who wants to overcome her feeling of guilt at having a good time — and all the good things that her wealthy family provides — while a poor neighbor is plunged into grief.

The story in which plot is treated very casually, and in which, frequently, no conclusive ending is reached, is said to have been originated by the Russian writer Chekhov, and is often contrasted with the Poe-O. Henry-Maupassant type which does stress plot. Chekhov's "The Bet" has, at first glance, a strong plot interest because we see a banker about to murder a young lawyer so that the banker won't have to pay off a two million ruble bet he had made. But the murder does not come off; the banker's problem is solved *for* him. The banker returns to his room, feeling revulsion for his own avarice and materialism, and that's the story: a character revelation, a character contrast, with a bit of philosophizing about the contemplative life the lawyer has led during his voluntary imprisonment. The ends are not all tied up; we may still wonder what is going to happen to the lawyer.

The philosophical theme is even stronger in Conrad's "Youth." This is an excellent single point of view story: the epic struggle of the speaker, Marlow, to reach the mysterious, romantic East. The plot structure is very simple. The worn-out old ship *Judea* (motto "Do or Die") tries and tries and tries again to get started on its voyage to Bangkok. At last, it keeps going — no mutiny, no storm, no leaks — until, in the Indian Ocean, young Second Mate Marlow noticed a bench on deck tilting and "immediately became aware of a queer sensation, of an absurd delusion, — I seemed somehow to be in the air. I heard all round me like a pent-up breath released — as if a thousand giants simultaneously had said Phoo! — and felt a dull concussion which made my ribs ache suddenly. . . . I was in the air, and my body was describing a short parabola." The ship has blown up; the deck is "a wilderness of smashed timber, lying crosswise like trees in a wood after a hurricane." Everything happens to the *Judea*, and Marlow's reaction is "What next? . . . Now, this is something like. This is great. I wonder what will happen. O youth!"

But the last exclamation is the cry of the older Marlow who is telling this tale of "the best time, that time when we were young at sea; young and had nothing, on the sea that gives nothing, except hard knocks — and sometimes a chance to feel your strength . . ." — that seemingly immortal youth, which is now past. It is the contrast between the narrator and the indomitable young Marlow, the hero, which gives this splendid adventure story its deep feeling, its theme. The young Marlow of the voyage reached his goal, commanded his first crew, in a lifeboat, and saw the East, "a high outline of mountains, blue and afar in the



morning; like faint mist at noon; a jagged wall of purple at sunset." The older Marlow faces the shadows. And Conrad stresses this theme of the glory and evanescence of youth, over and over, and particularly at the end.

Plot, character, theme — what else is there to narrative writing? Well, there's dialogue. We don't exactly speak of a "dialogue story," as we do of a "character" or "theme" story — although Hemingway's "The Killers" would almost qualify for such a title — but certainly any writer of narrative will have to make his characters speak at times. Usually, the more often they speak the better. And how can they be made to sound like themselves and not like the writer muffling his voice behind the scenes? Hemingway, Lardner, and Fitzgerald, all masters of dialogue, offer some hints.

In the first place, as Hemingway's "The Killers" suggests, speeches in real life are likely to be short. Hemingway carried this principle to an extreme, and evolved a stylized, staccato dialogue which other writers have tried not very successfully to imitate. Listen to these two gangsters talking to a counter boy (George) in a lunchroom:

"I'll have a roast pork tenderloin with apple sauce and mashed potatoes," the first man said.

"It isn't ready yet."

"What the hell do you put it on the card for?"

"That's the dinner," George explained. "You can get that at six o'clock."

George looked at the clock on the wall behind the counter.

"It's five o'clock."

"The clock says twenty minutes past five," the second man said.

"It's twenty minutes fast."

"Oh, to hell with the clock," the first man said. "What have you got to eat?"

This is colloquial and convincing. But so are the longer, more rhythmical speeches of Ring Lardner's characters ("Just a kid; that's all he is; a regular boy. Get what I mean? Don't know the meanin' o' bad habits. Never tasted liquor in his life and would prob'ly get sick if he smelled it. . . . Get what I mean?") and Fitzgerald's slangy, Jazz Age conversations (" 'All right, babies, do it for your mamma. Just one little seven.' Nancy was *cooing* to the dice.") Use of contractions and slang gives realism to dialogue.

Also, dialogue should *serve a purpose* in the story. Hemingway's, quoted above, characterizes the killers and introduces the important point of the time. The man they have come to murder is due, we soon learn, at six o'clock, and the earlier reference to five o'clock is then remembered by the reader, creating suspense, without the author's having to repeat it. Lardner's speech is by the manager of that first-class heel and welterweight champion, Midge Kelly; it presents the popular conception of his character, in contrast to the unsavory truth about him which Lardner has told already; in fact, it brings out the theme of the story. The snatch of speech quoted from Fitzgerald's heroine Nancy shows

her engaged in the gambling spree which gave Jim his chance to rescue her and perhaps win a new life for himself. So the characters in all these stories will be found talking in order to characterize, to express the theme, or to advance the action — but not just for the sake of the talk itself.

There is a great deal to the art of the narrative. Faulkner's simple, beautifully worded "Barn Burning" uses the form for tragedy. A boy must choose between his sense of justice and his own father. This is the situation which the old poets liked: there is no solution possible except a tragic one. The writer has found a conflict which *must* excite pity and fear, provided he makes his chief characters plausible, and tells the story in a style that is worthy of it. The opening episode, the trial before the Justice of the Peace, shows the reader the character of the father, the predicament of the boy. From that, Faulkner proceeds straight to the crisis, the incident of the rug, and to the climax, when the father sets out to burn another barn. The action is deceptively simple, the conclusion moving.

Steele and Benét bring us back to the solidly plotted, popular type of story. Steele's "Footfalls," in fact, is a mystery, one with a superb leading character in the blind cobbler Boaz Negro, but definitely a plot story in which the solution springs from the carefully planted fact that Boaz can recognize individuals by their footfalls. "The Devil and Daniel Webster" contains an exciting conflict between the two named in the title, a good dash of patriotic Americanism, nice local color (New Hampshire) — all the ingredients of an entertaining *Saturday Evening Post* story, which is exactly what it originally was. Poe and O. Henry, we feel, would have enjoyed it.

This, in short, is the narrative: these selections following, many of which have lived for several generations already, many of which will live in the future, because they have captured the brief, bright passion which is the source and goal of the storyteller's art. In a story you can use everything you have learned: explanatory writing in your flashback, argument in your speeches, description and characterization, of course, throughout. But begin with the new thing, the problem-solution plot structure. Write about an incident that has moved you. Write as simply and powerfully as you can so that, in Conrad's words, you may make your reader hear and feel and see the truth that you have experienced.

*After graduating from the United States Naval Academy and serving three years with the fleet, Hanson Baldwin resigned from the Navy, in 1927, to become a newspaperman. He was appointed military editor of the New York Times in 1942. His books have been on military subjects or the sea, and include The Caissons Roll (1938), a study of European rearmament, and Great Mistakes of the War (1950), which aroused considerable comment. Admiral Death (1939), the collection of true sea stories from which "R.M.S. Titanic" is taken, was called "a model of clear objective reporting" with "narrative . . . as cold as ice."*

The White Star liner *Titanic*, largest ship the world had ever known, sailed from Southampton on her maiden voyage to New York on April 10, 1912. The paint on her strakes was fair and bright; she was fresh from Harland and Wolff's Belfast yards, strong in the strength of her forty-six thousand tons of steel, bent, hammered, shaped, and riveted through the three years of her slow birth.

There was little fuss and fanfare at her sailing; her sister-ship, the *Olympic* — slightly smaller than the *Titanic* — had been in service for some months and to her had gone the thunder of the cheers.

But the *Titanic* needed no whistling steamers or shouting crowds to call attention to her superlative qualities. Her bulk dwarfed the ships near her as longshoremen singled up her mooring lines and cast off the turns of heavy rope from the dock bollards. She was not only the largest ship afloat, but was believed to be the safest. Carlisle, her builder, had given her double bottoms and had divided her hull into sixteen water-tight compartments, which made her, men thought, unsinkable. She had been built to be and had been described as a gigantic lifeboat. Her designers' dreams of a triple-screw giant, a luxurious, floating hotel, which could speed to New York at twenty-three knots, had been carefully translated from blue prints and mold loft lines at the Belfast yards into a living reality.

The *Titanic's* sailing from Southampton, though quiet, was not wholly uneventful. As the liner moved slowly toward the end of her dock that April day, the surge of her passing sucked away from the quay the steamer *New York*, moored just to seaward of the *Titanic's* berth. There were sharp cracks as the manila mooring lines of the *New York* parted under the strain. The frayed ropes writhed and whistled through the air and snapped down among the waving crowd on the pier; the *New York* swung toward the *Titanic's* bow, was checked and dragged back to the dock barely in time to avert a collision. Seamen muttered, thought it an ominous start.

Past Spithead and the Isle of Wight the *Titanic* steamed. She called at Cherbourg at dusk and then laid her course for Queenstown. At 1:30 P.M. on Thursday, April 11, she stood out of Queenstown harbor, screaming gulls soaring in her wake, with 2,201 persons — men, women, and children — aboard.

Occupying the Empire bedrooms and Georgian suites of the first-class accommodations were many well-known men and women—Colonel John Jacob Astor and his young bride; Major Archibald Butt, military aide to President Taft, and his friend, Frank D. Millet, the painter; John B. Thayer, vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Charles M. Hays, president of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada; W. T. Stead, the English journalist; Jacques Futrelle, French novelist; H. R. Harris, theatrical manager, and Mrs. Harris; Mr. and Mrs. Isidor Straus; and J. Bruce Ismay, chairman and managing director of the White Star line.

Down in the plain wooden cabins of the steerage class were 706 immigrants to the land of promise, and trimly stowed in the great holds was a cargo valued at \$420,000: oak beams, sponges, wine, calabashes, and an odd miscellany of the common and the rare.

The *Titanic* took her departure on Fastnet Light and, heading into the night, laid her course for New York. She was due at Quarantine the following Wednesday morning.

Sunday dawned fair and clear. The *Titanic* steamed smoothly toward the west, faint streamers of brownish smoke trailing from her funnels. The purser held services in the saloon in the morning; on the steerage deck aft the immigrants were playing games and a Scotsman was puffing "The Campbells Are Coming" on his bagpipes in the midst of the uproar.

At 9 A.M. a message from the steamer *Caronia* sputtered into the wireless shack:

*Captain, Titanic* — Westbound steamers report berg growlers and field ice in 42 degrees N. from 49 degrees to 51 degrees W. 12th April.

Compliments —

Barr.

It was cold in the afternoon; the sun was brilliant, but the *Titanic*, her screws turning over at 75 revolutions per minute, was approaching the Banks.

In the Marconi cabin Second Operator Harold Bride, ear-phones clamped on his head, was figuring accounts; he did not stop to answer when he heard *MWL*, Continental Morse for the nearby Leyland liner, *Californian*, calling the *Titanic*. The *Californian* had some message about three icebergs; he didn't bother then to take it down. About 1:41 P.M. the rasping spark of those days spoke again across the water. It was the *Baltic*, calling the *Titanic*, warning her of ice on the steamer track. Bride took the message down and sent it up to the bridge. The officer-of-the-deck glanced at it; sent it to the bearded master of the *Titanic*, Captain E. C. Smith, a veteran of the White Star service. It was lunch

time then; the Captain, walking along the promenade deck, saw Mr. Ismay, stopped, and handed him the message without comment. Ismay read it, stuffed it in his pocket, told two ladies about the icebergs, and resumed his walk. Later, about 7:15 P.M., the Captain requested the return of the message in order to post it in the chart room for the information of officers.

Dinner that night in the Jacobean dining room was gay. It was bitter on deck, but the night was calm and fine; the sky was moonless but studded with stars twinkling coldly in the clear air.

After dinner some of the second-class passengers gathered in the saloon, where the Reverend Mr. Carter conducted a "hymn sing-song." It was almost ten o'clock and the stewards were waiting with biscuits and coffee as the group sang:

O, hear us when we cry to Thee  
For those in peril on the sea.

On the bridge Second Officer Lightoller — short, stocky, efficient — was relieved at ten o'clock by First Officer Murdoch. Lightoller had talked with other officers about the proximity of ice; at least five wireless ice warnings had reached the ship; lookouts had been cautioned to be alert; captains and officers expected to reach the field at any time after 9:30 P.M. At 22 knots, speed unslackened, the *Titanic* plowed on through the night.

Lightoller left the darkened bridge to his relief and turned in. Captain Smith went to his cabin. The steerage was long since quiet; in the first and second cabins lights were going out; voices were growing still, people were asleep. Murdoch paced back and forth on the bridge, peering out over the dark water, glancing now and then at the compass in front of Quartermaster Hichens at the wheel.

In the crow's nest, Lookout Frederick Fleet and his partner, Leigh, gazed down at the water, still and unruffled in the dim, starlit darkness. Behind and below them the ship, a white shadow with here and there a last winking light; ahead of them a dark and silent and cold ocean.

There was a sudden clang. "Dong-dong. Dong-dong. Dong-dong. Dong!" The metal clapper of the great ship's bell struck out 11:30. Mindful of the warnings, Fleet strained his eyes, searching the darkness for the dreaded ice. But there were only the stars and the sea.

In the wireless room, where Phillips, first operator, had relieved Bride, the buzz of the *Californian's* set again crackled into the ear-phones:

*Californian*: "Say, old man, we are stuck here, surrounded by ice."

*Titanic*: "Shut up, shut up; keep out. I am talking to Cape Race; you are jamming my signals."

Then, a few minutes later — about 11:40 . . .

Out of the dark she came, a vast, dim, white, monstrous shape, directly in the *Titanic's* path. For a moment Fleet doubted his eyes. But she was a deadly reality, this ghastly *thing*. Frantically, Fleet struck three bells — *something dead ahead*. He snatched the telephone and called the bridge:

"Iceberg! Right ahead!"

The First Officer heard but did not stop to acknowledge the message.

"Hard-a-starboard!"

Hichens strained at the wheel; the bow swung slowly to port. The monster was almost upon them now.

Murdoch leaped to the engine-room telegraph. Bells clanged. Far below in the engine-room those bells struck the first warning. Danger! The indicators on the dial faces swung round to "Stop!" Then "Full speed astern!" Frantically the engineers turned great valve wheels; answered the bridge bells. . . .

There was a slight shock, a brief scraping, a small list to port. Shell ice — slabs and chunks of it — fell on the foredeck. Slowly the *Titanic* stopped.

Captain Smith hurried out of his cabin.

"What has the ship struck?"

Murdoch answered, "An iceberg, sir. I hard-a-starboarded and reversed the engines, and I was going to hard-a-port around it, but she was too close. I could not do any more. I have closed the water-tight doors."

Fourth Officer Boxhall, other officers, the carpenter, came to the bridge. The Captain sent Boxhall and the carpenter below to ascertain the damage.

A few lights switched on in the first and second cabins; sleepy passengers peered through porthole glass; some casually asked the stewards:

"Why have we stopped?"

"I don't know, sir, but I don't suppose it is anything much."

In the smoking room a quorum of gamblers and their prey were still sitting round a poker table; the usual crowd of kibitzers looked on. They had felt the slight jar of the collision and had seen an eighty-foot ice mountain glide by the smoking room windows, but the night was calm and clear, the *Titanic* was "unsinkable"; they hadn't bothered to go on deck.

But far below, in the warren of passages on the starboard side forward, in the forward holds and boiler rooms, men could see that the *Titanic's* hurt was mortal. In No. 6 boiler room, where the red glow from the furnaces lighted up the naked, sweaty chests of coal-blackened firemen, water was pouring through a great gash about two feet above the floor plates. This was no slow leak; the ship was open to the sea; in ten minutes there were eight feet of water in No. 6. Long before then the stokers had raked the flaming fires out of the furnaces and had scrambled through the water-tight doors into No. 5 or had climbed up the long steel ladders to safety. When Boxhall looked at the mailroom in No. 3 hold,

twenty-four feet above the keel, the mailbags were already floating about in the slushing water. In No. 5 boiler room a stream of water spurted into an empty bunker. All six compartments forward of No. 4 were open to the sea; in ten seconds the iceberg's jagged claw had ripped a three-hundred-foot slash in the bottom of the great *Titanic*.

Reports came to the bridge; Ismay in dressing gown ran out on deck in the cold, still, starlit night, climbed up the bridge ladder.

"What has happened?"

Captain Smith: "We have struck ice."

"Do you think she is seriously damaged?"

Captain Smith: "I'm afraid she is."

Ismay went below and passed Chief Engineer William Bell fresh from an inspection of the damaged compartments. Bell corroborated the Captain's statement; hurried back down the glistening steel ladders to his duty. Man after man followed him — Thomas Andrews, one of the ship's designers, Archie Frost, the builder's chief engineer, and his twenty assistants — men who had no posts of duty in the engine-room but whose traditions called them there.

On deck, in corridor and stateroom, life flowed again. Men, women, and children awoke and questioned; orders were given to uncover the lifeboats; water rose into the firemen's quarters; half-dressed stokers streamed up on deck. But the passengers — most of them — did not know that the *Titanic* was sinking. The shock of the collision had been so slight that some were not awakened by it; the *Titanic* was so huge that she must be unsinkable; the night was too calm, too beautiful, to think of death at sea.

Captain Smith half ran to the door of the radio shack. Bride, partly dressed, eyes dulled with sleep, was standing behind Phillips, waiting.

"Send the call for assistance."

The blue spark danced: "CQD — CQD — CQD — CQ —"

Miles away Marconi men heard. Cape Race heard it, and the steamships *La Provence* and *Mt. Temple*.

The sea was surging into the *Titanic's* hold. At 12:20 the water burst into the seamen's quarters through a collapsed fore and aft wooden bulkhead. Pumps strained in the engine-rooms — men and machinery making a futile fight against the sea. Steadily the water rose.

The boats were swung out — slowly; for the deckhands were late in reaching their stations, there had been no boat drill, and many of the crew did not know to what boats they were assigned. Orders were shouted; the safety valves had lifted, and steam was blowing off in a great rushing roar. In the chart house Fourth Officer Boxhall bent above a chart, working rapidly with pencil and dividers.

12:25 A.M. Boxhall's position is sent out to a fleet of vessels: "Come at once; we have struck a berg."

To the Cunarder *Carpathia* (Arthur Henry Rostron, Master, New York to Liverpool, fifty-eight miles away): "It's a CQD, old man. Position 41-46 N.; 50-14 W."

The blue spark dancing: "Sinking; cannot hear for noise of steam."

12:30 A.M. The word is passed: "Women and children in the boats." Stewards finish waking their passengers below; life-preservers are tied on; some men smile at the precaution. "The *Titanic* is unsinkable." The *Mt. Temple* starts for the *Titanic*; the *Carpathia*, with a double-watch in her stokeholds, radios, "Coming hard." The CQD changes the course of many ships — but not of one; the operator of the *Californian*, nearby, has just put down his ear-phones and turned in.

The CQD flashes over land and sea from Cape Race to New York; newspaper city rooms leap to life and presses whir.

On the *Titanic*, water creeps over the bulkhead between Nos. 5 and 6 fire-rooms. She is going down by the head; the engineers — fighting a losing battle — are forced back foot by foot by the rising water. Down the promenade deck, Happy Jack Hume, the bandsman, runs with his instrument.

12:45 A.M. Murdoch, in charge on the starboard side, eyes tragic, but calm and cool, orders boat No. 7 lowered. The women hang back; they want no boat-ride on an ice-strewn sea; the *Titanic* is unsinkable. The men encourage them, explain that this is just a precautionary measure: "We'll see you again at breakfast." There is little confusion; passengers stream slowly to the boat deck. In the steerage the immigrants chatter excitedly.

A sudden sharp hiss — a streaked flare against the night; Boxhall sends a rocket toward the sky. It explodes, and a parachute of white stars lights up the icy sea. "God! Rockets!" The band plays ragtime.

No. 8 is lowered, and No. 5. Ismay, still in dressing gown, calls for women and children, handles lines, stumbles in the way of an officer, is told to "get the hell out of here." Third Officer Pitman takes charge of No. 5; as he swings into the boat Murdoch grasps his hand. "Good-by and good luck, old man."

No. 6 goes over the side. There are only twenty-eight people in a lifeboat with a capacity of sixty-five.

A light stabs from the bridge; Boxhall is calling in Morse flashes again and again, to a strange ship stopped in the ice jam five to ten miles away. Another rocket drops its showers of sparks above the ice-strewn sea and the dying ship.

1:00 A.M. Slowly the water creeps higher; the fore ports of the *Titanic* are dipping into the sea. Rope squeaks through blocks; lifeboats drop jerkily seaward. Through the shouting on the decks comes the sound of the band playing ragtime.

The "Millionaires' Special" leaves the ship — boat No. 1, with a capacity of forty people, carries only Sir Cosmo and Lady Duff Gordon and ten others. Aft, the frightened immigrants mill and jostle and rush for a boat. An officer's



first flies out; three shots are fired in the air, and the panic is quelled. . . . Four Chinese sneak unseen into a boat and hide in its bottom.

1:20 A.M. Water is coming into No. 4 boiler room. Stokers slice and shovel as water laps about their ankles — steam for the dynamos, steam for the dancing spark! As the water rises, great ash hoes rake the flaming coals from the furnaces. Safety valves pop; the stokers retreat aft, and the water-tight doors clang shut behind them.

The rockets fling their splendor toward the stars. The boats are more heavily loaded now, for the passengers know the *Titanic* is sinking. Women cling and sob. The great screws aft are rising clear of the sea. Half-filled boats are ordered to come alongside the cargo ports and take on more passengers, but the ports are never opened — and the boats are never filled. Others pull for the steamer's light miles away but never reach it; the lights disappear, the unknown ship steams off.

The water rises and the band plays ragtime.

1:30 A.M. Lightoller is getting the port boats off; Murdoch the starboard. As one boat is lowered into the sea a boat officer fires his gun along the ship's side to stop a rush from the lower decks. A woman tries to take her Great Dane into a boat with her; she is refused and steps out of the boat to die with her dog. Millet's "little smile which played on his lips all through the voyage" plays no more; his lips are grim, but he waves good-by and brings wraps for the women.

Benjamin Guggenheim, in evening clothes, smiles and says, "We've dressed up in our best and are prepared to go down like gentlemen."

1:40 A.M. Boat 14 is clear, and then 13, 15, 16, and C. The lights still shine, but the *Baltic* hears the blue spark say, "Engine-room getting flooded."

The *Olympic* signals, "Am lighting up all possible boilers as fast as can."

Major Butt helps women into the last boats and waves good-by to them. Mrs. Straus puts her foot on the gunwale of a lifeboat, then she draws back and goes to her husband: "We have been together many years; where you go I will go." Colonel John Jacob Astor puts his young wife in a lifeboat, steps back, taps cigarette on fingernail: "Good-by, dearie; I'll join you later."

1:45 A.M. The foredeck is under water, the fo'c'sle head almost awash; the great stern is lifted high toward the bright stars; and still the band plays. Mr. and Mrs. Harris approach a lifeboat arm in arm.

Officer: "Ladies first, please."

Harris bows, smiles, steps back: "Of course, certainly; ladies first."

Boxhall fires the last rocket, then leaves in charge of boat No. 2.

2:00 A.M. She is dying now; her bow goes deeper, her stern higher. But there must be steam. Below in the stokeholds the sweaty firemen keep steam up for the flaring lights and the dancing spark. The glowing coals slide and tumble over the slanted grate bars; the sea pounds behind that yielding bulkhead. But the spark dances on.

The *Asian* hears Phillips try the new signal — SOS.

Boat No. 4 has left now; boat D leaves ten minutes later. Jacques Futrelle clasps his wife: "For God's sake, go! It's your last chance; go!" Madame Futrelle is half forced into the boat. It clears the side.

There are about 660 people in the boats, and 1,500 still on the sinking *Titanic*.

On top of the officers' quarters men work frantically to get the two collapsibles stowed there over the side. Water is over the forward part of A deck now; it surges up the companionways toward the boat deck. In the radio shack, Bride has slipped a coat and lifejacket about Phillips as the first operator sits hunched over his key, sending — still sending — "41-46 N.; 50-14 W. CQD — CQD — SOS — SOS —"

The captain's tired white face appears at the radio-room door: "Men, you have done your full duty. You can do no more. Now, it's every man for himself." The captain disappears — back to his sinking bridge, where Painter, his personal steward, stands quietly waiting for orders. The spark dances on. Bride turns his back and goes into the inner cabin. As he does so, a stoker, grimed with coal, mad with fear, steals into the shack and reaches for the lifejacket on Phillips' back. Bride wheels about and brains him with a wrench.

2:10 A.M. Below decks the steam is still holding, though the pressure is falling — rapidly. In the gymnasium on the boat deck the athletic instructor watches quietly as two gentlemen ride the bicycles and another swings casually at the punching bag. Mail clerks stagger up the boat-deck stairways, dragging soaked mail sacks. The spark still dances. The band still plays — but not ragtime:

Nearer my God to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee . . .

A few men take up the refrain; others kneel on the slanting decks to pray. Many run and scramble aft, where hundreds are clinging above the silent screws on the great uptilted stern. The spark still dances and the lights still flare; the engineers are on the job. The hymn comes to its close. Bandmaster Hartley, Yorkshireman violinist, taps his bow against a bulkhead, calls for "Autumn" as the water curls about his feet, and the eight musicians brace themselves against the ship's slant. People are leaping from the decks into the nearby water — the icy water. A woman cries, "Oh, save me, save me!" A man answers, "Good lady, save yourself. Only God can save you now." The band plays "Autumn":

God of Mercy and Compassion!  
Look with pity on my pain . . .

The water creeps over the bridge where the *Titanic's* master stands; heavily he steps out to meet it.

2:17 A.M. "CQ —" The *Virginian* hears a ragged, blurred CQ, then an abrupt

stop. The blue spark dances no more. The lights flicker out; the engineers have lost their battle.

2:18 A.M. Men run about blackened decks; leap into the night; are swept into the sea by the curling wave which licks up the *Titanic's* length. Lightoller does not leave the ship; the ship leaves him; there are hundreds like him, but only a few who live to tell of it. The funnels still swim above the water, but the ship is climbing to the perpendicular; the bridge is under and most of the foremast; the great stern rises like a squat leviathan. Men swim away from the sinking ship; others drop from the stern.

The band plays in the darkness, the water lapping upwards:

Hold me up in mighty waters,  
Keep my eyes on things above,  
Righteousness, divine atonement.  
Peace and everlas . . .

The forward funnel snaps and crashes into the sea; its steel tons hammer out of existence swimmers struggling in the freezing water. Streams of sparks, of smoke and steam, burst from the after funnels. The ship upends to 50 — to 60 degrees.

Down in the black abyss of the stokeholds, of the engine-rooms, where the dynamos have whirled at long last to a stop, the stokers and the engineers are reeling against hot metal, the rising water clutching at their knees. The boilers, the engine cylinders, rip from their bed plates; crash through bulkheads; rumble — steel against steel.

The *Titanic* stands on end, poised briefly for the plunge. Slowly she slides to her grave — slowly at first, and then more quickly — quickly — quickly.

2:20 A.M. The greatest ship in the world has sunk. From the calm, dark waters, where the floating lifeboats move, there goes up, in the white wake of her passing, "one long continuous moan."

The boats that the *Titanic* had launched pulled safely away from the slight suction of the sinking ship, pulled away from the screams that came from the lips of the freezing men and women in the water. The boats were poorly manned and badly equipped, and they had been unevenly loaded. Some carried so few seamen that women bent to the oars. Mrs. Astor tugged at an oar handle; the Countess of Rothes took a tiller. Shivering stokers in sweaty coal-blackened singlets and light trousers steered in some boats; stewards in white coats rowed in others. Ismay was in the last boat that left the ship from the starboard side; with Mr. Carter of Philadelphia and two seamen he tugged at the oars. In one of the lifeboats an Italian with a broken wrist — disguised in a woman's shawl and hat — huddled on the floor boards, ashamed now that fear had left him. In another rode the only baggage saved from the *Titanic* — the carry-all of Samuel L. Goldenberg, one of the rescued passengers.

There were only a few boats that were heavily loaded; most of those that were half empty made but perfunctory efforts to pick up the moaning swimmers, their officers and crew fearing they would endanger the living if they pulled back into the midst of the dying. Some boats beat off the freezing victims; fear-crazed men and women struck with oars at the heads of swimmers. One woman drove her fist into the face of a half-dead man as he tried feebly to climb over the gunwale. Two other women helped him in and stanchied the flow of blood from the ring-cuts on his face.

One of the collapsible boats, which had floated off the top of the officers' quarters when the *Titanic* sank, was an icy haven for thirty or forty men. The boat had capsized as the ship sank; men swam to it, clung to it, climbed upon its slippery bottom, stood knee-deep in water in the freezing air. Chunks of ice swirled about their legs; their soaked clothing clutched their bodies in icy folds. Colonel Archibald Gracie was cast up there, Gracie who had leaped from the stern as the *Titanic* sank; young Thayer who had seen his father die; Lightoller who had twice been sucked down with the ship and twice blown to the surface by a belch of air; Bride, the second operator, and Phillips, the first. There were many stokers, half-naked; it was a shivering company. They stood there in the icy sea, under the far stars, and sang and prayed — the Lord's Prayer. After a while a lifeboat came and picked them off, but Phillips was dead then or died soon afterward in the boat.

Only a few of the boats had lights; only one — No. 2 — had a light that was of any use to the *Carpathia*, twisting through the ice-field to the rescue. Other ships were "coming hard" too; one, the *Californian*, was still dead to opportunity.

The blue sparks still dance, but not the *Titanic's*. *La Provence* to *Celtic*: "Nobody has heard the *Titanic* for about two hours."

It was 2:40 when the *Carpathia* first sighted the green light from No. 2 boat; it was 4:10 when she picked up the first boat and learned that the *Titanic* had foundered. The last of the moaning cries had just died away then.

Captain Rostron took the survivors aboard, boatload by boatload. He was ready for them, but only a small minority of them required much medical attention. Bride's feet were twisted and frozen; others were suffering from exposure; one died, and seven were dead when taken from the boats, and were buried at sea.

It was then that the fleet of racing ships learned they were too late; the *Parisian* heard the weak signals of *MPA*, the *Carpathia*, report the death of the *Titanic*. It was then — or soon afterward, when her radio operator put on his ear-phones — that the *Californian*, the ship that had been within sight as the *Titanic* was sinking, first learned of the disaster.

And it was then, in all its white-green majesty, that the *Titanic's* survivors saw the iceberg, tinted with the sunrise, floating idly, pack-ice jammed about its base, other bergs heaving slowly nearby on the blue breast of the sea. . . .

## QUESTIONS

1. Why is the narrative "R.M.S. *Titanic*" not a short story? What might it gain or lose if made into one?
2. Find several examples of dramatic irony (like the hymn the passengers sing with no idea that *they* are "in peril on the sea").
3. What was the chief reason (implied) for the disaster? Name the nearest ship; why didn't it come to the rescue?
4. Give examples of carelessness, courage, and cowardice in the escape from the sinking ship.
5. Discuss the effectiveness of the concluding sentence.

James Reid Parker

## The First Day

*James Reid Parker has been highly praised for his "half-wry, half-satirical, and wholly delightful stories" in the New Yorker. He is a New Englander who became a writer after spending nine years in the "academic procession" — as instructor and professor of English at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. During World War II he served in the Army and rose from the rank of first lieutenant to that of lieutenant colonel. He has conducted a column, "Small World," in Woman's Day and published several collections of his short stories and sketches. Two of the most recent are The Pleasure Was Mine (1946) and Open House (1951). Academic Procession, his first book, is about faculty life in a small college town.*

When young Dr. Sargent arrived at the college to assume his duties as a member of the faculty, he reversed a lifelong custom. Now that he was well equipped with the suitable degrees, tokens of graduate study, he was about to address a class. Hitherto he had always been among those addressed.

The college had given him an office, with a nice desk and three chairs upholstered in green leather, near his lecture-room. Sitting in one of the green chairs, Sargent nervously fiddled with his notes for the first day. He had the academic equivalent of stagefright. Strange lumps were forming in his throat,

From *Academic Procession* by James Reid Parker, copyright, 1937, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

and there was a hollow feeling in the pit of his stomach. His watch said five minutes to nine — five minutes before his first college class. The students would be freshmen, as new to the routine as himself.

A warning bell rang. In a moment the corridor was crowded with young men going in and out of lecture-rooms and professors' offices. It was vital and alive, an artery rushing with blood. Sargent opened the door, looked out at the melange of faces and forms, and instantly drew back. For one final minute he enjoyed the delicious security of hiding behind the frosted glass. Then he opened the door again and slipped into the corridor.

The crowd was moving more slowly at the entrance to his lecture-room. The men dropped their cigarettes on the floor, and crushed them. Sargent drew rapid, solacing gusts of smoke from his own, and finally relinquished it. Somebody took his arm.

"Who *is* this guy Sargent?" asked a voice. "What do you know about him?"

"Not very much," said Sargent weakly.

The young man had edged forward to exchange confidences in the few brief seconds before Calvary. He was a pleasant-looking chap, with hair cut so close that it stood upright. He must have noticed Sargent's air of helplessness, because he adopted him at once.

"When we get inside," said the young man, "let's get seats in the last row. That's the best way to do."

"Is it?" responded Sargent.

"Sure," said the young man. "Just do the way I do. Suppose he turns out to be a pain in the neck. We'll be all right if we get in the last row, the first day. Of course, maybe he'll have a special seating arrangement. Some do and some don't. This used to be my brother's college — that's how I know a good deal about the way they do things."

Young Dr. Sargent looked at his friend with the upright hair, and suddenly remembered that his own college life was only three or four years behind him, after all. It had been much like this.

"Suppose he *doesn't* turn out to be a pain in the neck," he offered hopefully. "What do we do then?"

"If he's all right, we might as well move up front after today," said the young man. "You can hear better."

They were inside the lecture-room now. Instructing Sargent to follow, the protector dashed to the last row with a haste born of experience. In any classroom the last row commands a certain popularity. Sargent tried to establish himself as inconspicuously as possible on the platform. This was difficult. He pretended to busy himself with checking over his notes. Presently, without looking up from the lectern, he called the roll. He didn't want to discover who the young man was.

But Sargent was forced to look up when the roll was finished, and the

hypnotic power of morbid curiosity drew his eyes to the last row. His guardian's head was buried in a notebook.

"Gentlemen," Sargent began, "this — er — is my first day as a member of the faculty, and — er — if you are in any way nervous about attending a college class for the first time, you can't possibly — um — be as nervous as I am. Er — during the lecture you may smoke if you want to."

Then tension relaxed. He had said the right thing.

#### QUESTIONS

1. List familiar objects which establish a typical college setting.
2. Why did the student "adopt" Dr. Sargent? Describe the student. List character traits of Dr. Sargent.
3. Why isn't more of the story told in dialogue?
4. Does Parker's humor depend on situation, choice of words, or some other factor? Give examples.
5. How does the author prepare you to accept the ending?

Edgar Allan Poe

## The Tell-Tale Heart

*Edgar Allan Poe gave the short story its modern form by emphasizing unity of effect. In 1842 he wrote: "A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived . . . a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then . . . combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect." He applied his theory in such masterpieces as "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Cask of Amontillado," and "The Fall of the House of Usher," as well as in his ratiocinative detective stories (another form invented by Poe), "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." As an editor, he approved of horror stories; he said they helped to sell the magazine.*

True! — nervous — very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am! but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses — not destroyed — not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard

all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily — how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to tell how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture — a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees — very gradually — I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded — with what caution — with what foresight — with what dissimulation I went to work!

I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it — oh, so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, so that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly — very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! — would a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously — oh, so cautiously — cautiously (for the hinges creaked) — I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights — every night just at midnight — but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he had passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I *felt* the extent of my own powers — of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back — but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers), and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.



I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out: "Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening; — just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or grief — oh no! — it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself: "It is nothing but the wind in the chimney — it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "it is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions; but he had found all in vain. *All in vain*; because Death, in approaching him, had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel — although he neither saw nor heard — to *feel* the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little — a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it — you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily — until, at length, a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and full upon the vulture eye.

It was open — wide, wide open — and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness — all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray, as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And now — have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the senses? — now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew *that* sound well too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder

and louder every instant. The old man's terror *must* have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! — do you mark me well? I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me — the sound would be heard by a neighbor! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once — once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs.

I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye — not even *his* — could have detected anything wrong. There was nothing to wash out — no stain of any kind — no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all — ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock — still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart — for what had I *now* to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbor during the night: suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled — for *what* had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search — search *well*. I led them, at length, to *his* chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them *here* to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My *manner* had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted familiar things.

But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: — it continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness — until, at length, I found that the noise was *not* within my ears.

No doubt I now grew *very* pale; — but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased — and what could I do? It was *a low, dull, quick sound — much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton*. I gasped for breath — and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly — more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. Why *would* they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observation of the men — but the noise steadily increased. Oh, God; what *could* I do? I foamed — I raved — I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder — louder — *louder!* And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! — no, no! They heard! — they suspected — they *knew!* — they were making a *mockery* of my horror! — this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! — and now — again! — hark! louder! louder! *louder!* —

“Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed! — tear up the planks! — here, here! — it is the beating of his hideous heart!”

#### QUESTIONS

1. What was the motive for this murder?
2. By what devices does Poe prolong the suspense?
3. How does the author, from the very beginning, suggest that the narrator was insane?
4. At what two points in the story did the narrator hear the “tell-tale heart”?
5. Is the behavior of the police plausible?
6. Compare this story with some modern study in abnormal psychology — drama, short story, or case history.

*"I love this land," said Guy de Maupassant of the French countryside, "and I love to live in it because my roots are here." Maupassant was born and raised in Normandy, and worked for seven years as a government clerk in Paris before achieving success with his first great story, "Tallow Ball." Thereafter for ten years (1880-90) nearly three hundred short stories, including "The Necklace" and "The String," poured from his desk and won him world fame as the supreme writer in that form. His theories of art were taken from his master, Flaubert: he was a realist, a believer in economy of word and phrase, sometimes accused of cynicism but praised for his delineation of provincial scenes and people. "Whatever the thing we wish to say," he observed, "there is but one word to express it."*

The sea is fretting the shore with tiny recurring waves. Small white clouds pass rapidly across the wide blue sky, swept along like birds by the swift wind; and the village, in a fold of a valley which descends to the sea, lies drowsing in the sun.

By the side of the road, at the very entrance to the village, stands the lonely dwelling of the Martin-Lévesques. It is a little fisherman's cottage with clay walls and a roof of thatch made gay with tufts of blue iris. There is a square patch of front garden the size of a pocket-handkerchief, containing onions, cabbages, parsley, and chervil, separated from the road by a hedge.

The man is out fishing, and his wife is sitting in front of the house, mending the meshes of a large brown net spread upon the wall like a gigantic spider's web. A little girl of fourteen is sitting near the gate in a cane-chair tilted back and supported against the fence; she is mending linen, miserable stuff already well darned and patched. Another girl a year younger is rocking in her arms a tiny child still too young to walk or talk, and two mites of two and three are squatting on the ground, opposite each other, digging in the earth with clumsy fingers and throwing handfuls of dust in one another's faces.

No one speaks. Only the baby that is being rocked to sleep cries incessantly in a weak, thin, small voice. A cat is asleep on the window-sill; some faded pinks at the foot of the wall make a fine patch of white blossom, over which a swarm of flies is humming.

The little girl sewing by the gate cries out abruptly:

"Mother!"

"What is it?" her mother answers.

"He's here again."

Ever since the morning they have been uneasy, for a man has been prowling round the house, an old man who looks like a beggar. They saw him as they were taking their father to his boat, to see him on board. He was sitting in the ditch opposite their gate. Then, when they came back from the seashore, they saw him still staring at the house.

He looked ill and very wretched. For more than an hour he had not stirred; then, seeing that they took him for a bad character, he had got up and gone off, dragging one leg behind him.

But before long they had seen him return with his weary limp and he had sat down again, a little farther off this time, as though to spy upon them.

The mother and the little girls were afraid. The mother was particularly uneasy, for she was by nature timid, and her husband, Lévesque, was not due back from the sea before nightfall.

Her husband's name was Lévesque, and hers was Martin, and the pair had been baptized Martin-Lévesque. This is why: her first husband had been a sailor named Martin who went every summer to the Newfoundland cod-fisheries. After two years of married life she had borne him a little daughter and was six months gone with another child, when her husband's ship, the *Two Sisters*, a three-masted barque from Dieppe, disappeared.

No news of her was ever heard, no member of the crew returned, and she was believed lost with all hands.

For ten years Madame Martin waited for her man, having a hard struggle to bring up the two children. Then, as she was a fine, strong woman, a local fisherman named Lévesque, a widower with one son, asked her to marry him. She consented, and bore him two other children in three years.

Their life was hard and laborious. Bread was dear, and meat almost unknown in the household. Sometimes they were in debt to the baker, in the winter, during the stormy months. But the children grew up strong; the neighbors said:

"They're good folk, the Martin-Lévesques. She's a hard-working wife, and there's no better fisherman than Lévesque."

The little girl sitting by the fence went on:

"He looks as though he knew us. Perhaps he's some beggar from Épreville or Auzebosc."

But the mother was sure of the truth. No, no, he wasn't a local man, that was certain.

As he remained motionless as a log, his eyes fixed obstinately upon the cottage, Madame Martin lost her temper; fear lending her courage, she seized a spade and went out in front of the gate.

"What are you doing there?" she cried to the vagabond.

"I'm taking the air," he replied in a hoarse voice. "Am I doing you any harm?"

"What are you playing the spy for round my house?" she replied.

"I'm doing no one any harm," he answered. "Can't I sit down by the roadside?"

Not finding an answer, she went back into the house.

Slowly the day dragged by. Round about midday the man disappeared. But near five o'clock he wandered past once more. He was not seen again that evening.

Lévesque came home at nightfall and was told of the affair.

"Some dirty rascal slinking about the place," he decided.

He went to bed with no anxiety, while his wife dreamed of this tramp who had stared at her with such strange eyes.

When dawn came a gale was blowing, and the sailor, seeing that he could not put out to sea, helped his wife to mend the nets.

About nine o'clock the eldest girl, one of Martin's children, who had gone out for some bread, ran in with a scared face, and cried:

"He's back again, mother."

Her mother felt a prick of excitement; very pale, she said to her husband:

"Go and tell him not to spy on us like this, Lévesque; it's fairly getting on my nerves."

Lévesque was a big fisherman with a brick-red face, a thick red beard, blue eyes with gleaming black pupils, and a strong neck always well wrapped up in a woolen scarf, to protect him from the wind and rain of the open sea. He went out calmly and marched up to the tramp.

And they began to talk.

The mother and children watched from the distance, trembling with excitement.

Suddenly the unknown man got up and accompanied Lévesque towards the house.

Madame Martin recoiled from him in terror. Her husband said:

"Give him a bit of bread and a mug of cider; he hasn't had a bite since the day before yesterday."

The two of them entered the cottage, followed by the woman and the children. The tramp sat down and began to eat, his head lowered before their gaze.

The mother stood and stared at him; the two eldest daughters, Martin's children, leaned against the door, one of them holding the youngest child, and stared eagerly at him. The two mites sitting among the cinders in the fireplace stopped playing with the black pot, as though to join in gaping at the stranger.

Lévesque sat down and asked him:

"Then you've come from far?"

"From the Mediterranean, from Cette."

"On foot, like that?"

"Yes. When you've no money, you must."

"Where are you going?"

"I was going here."

"Know anyone in these parts?"

"Maybe."

They were silent. He ate slowly, although ravenous, and took a sip of cider between the mouthfuls of bread. His face was worn and wrinkled, full of hollows, and he looked like a man who had suffered greatly.

Lévesque asked him abruptly:

"What's your name?"

He answered without raising his head:

"My name is Martin."

A strange shudder ran through the mother. She made a step forward as though to get a closer view of the vagabond, and remained standing in front of him, her arms hanging down and her mouth open. No one spoke another word. At last Lévesque said:

"Are you from these parts?"

"Yes, I'm from these parts."

And as he at last raised his head, his eyes met the woman's and remained gazing at them; it was as though their glances were riveted together.

Suddenly she said in an altered voice, low and trembling:

"Is it you, husband?"

"Yes, it's me," he said slowly.

He did not move, but continued to munch his bread.

Lévesque, surprised rather than excited, stammered:

"It's you, Martin?"

"Yes, it's me," said the other simply.

"Where have you come from?" asked the second husband.

He told his story:

"From the coast of Africa. We foundered on a reef. Three of us got away, Picard, Vatinel, and me. Then we were caught by savages, who kept us twelve years. Picard and Vatinel are dead. An English traveler rescued me and brought me back to Certe. And here I am."

Madame Martin had begun to cry, hiding her face in her apron.

"What are we to do now?" said Lévesque.

"Is it you that's her husband?" asked Martin.

"Yes, it's me," replied Lévesque.

They looked at one another and were silent.

Then Martin turned to the circle of children round him and, nodding towards the two girls, asked:

"Are those mine?"

"Yes, they're yours," said Lévesque.

He did not get up; he did not kiss them. He only said:

"God, they're big!"

"What are we to do?" repeated Lévesque.

Martin, perplexed, had no idea. Finally he made up his mind:

"Whatever you say. You're a good fellow. What bothers me is the house. I've got two children, you've got three. Each has his own. As for their mother, is she yours, or shall I have her? Do as you like about her, but as for the house, that's mine; my father left it to me, I was born in it; the lawyer's got the papers about it."

Madame Martin was still crying, stifling her short gasps in the blue cloth of her apron. The two tall girls had drawn nearer and were looking uneasily at their father.

He had finished eating, and said:

"What are we to do?"

Lévesque had an idea:

"We must get the priest. He'll decide."

Martin rose, and as he went towards his wife she flung herself upon his breast, sobbing:

"It's you, husband! Martin, my poor Martin, it's you!"

She held him in her arms, suddenly stirred by a breath of the past, by an anguished rush of memories that reminded her of her youth and of her first kisses.

Martin, much affected, kissed her bonnet. The two children by the fireplace both began to cry when they heard their mother cry, and the youngest of all, in the arms of the younger Martin daughter, screamed in a shrill voice like a fife out of tune.

Lévesque stood up and waited.

"Come on," he said. "We must get it put straight."

Martin let go of his wife and, as he was looking at his daughters, their mother said:

"You might kiss your dad."

They came up together, dry-eyed, surprised, a little frightened. He kissed them one after another, on both cheeks, with a loud, smacking kiss. The baby, seeing the stranger draw near, screamed so violently that it nearly fell into convulsions.

Then the two men went out together.

As they passed the Café du Commerce, Lévesque asked:

"How about a little drink?"

"Yes, I could do with some," declared Martin.

They went in and sat down in the room, which was still empty. Lévesque shouted:

"Hey, there, Chicot, two double brandies, and the best! It's Martin, he's come back; Martin, you know, my wife's man; Martin of the *Two Sisters*, that was lost."



The barman came up, three glasses in one hand and a pitcher of water in the other, a red-faced, podgy, pot-bellied man. In a calm voice he asked:

“Ah! So here you are, then, Martin?”

Martin answered:

“Here I am.”

#### QUESTIONS

1. Who is the chief character in this story?
2. What hints about Martin's identity are given in the beginning?
3. Compare Martin and Lévesque. Characterize the wife.
4. How many sentences are used to express emotion at the revelation of Martin's identity?
5. Is this story realistic or romantic?
6. In what way is its ending satisfactory? What other dilemmas might make good story material?

O. Henry

## The Cop and the Anthem

“O. Henry” (William Sydney Porter) is perhaps the most popular of all American short story writers. He was born in North Carolina, worked as journalist and bank teller in Texas, and served three years of a prison sentence in connection with bank irregularities; came to New York in 1902 and achieved success with his second volume of short stories, *The Four Million*. He contributed the “surprise ending,” in classics like “*The Gift of the Magi*,” and was unsurpassed in human interest in the more than six hundred stories he wrote before his early death — tales of Texas, South America, but above all of the Manhattan he loved. “Pull up the shades so I can see New York,” he said as he lay dying in 1910. “I don’t want to go home in the dark.”

On his bench in Madison Square Soapy moved uneasily. When wild geese honk high of nights, and when women without sealskin coats grow kind to their husbands, and when Soapy moves uneasily on his bench in the park, you may know that winter is near at hand.

From *The Four Million* by O. Henry. Copyright 1904 by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

A dead leaf fell in Soapy's lap. That was Jack Frost's card. Jack is kind to the regular denizens of Madison Square, and gives fair warning of his annual call. At the corners of four streets he hands his pasteboard to the North Wind, footman of the mansion of All Outdoors, so that the inhabitants thereof may make ready.

Soapy's mind became cognizant of the fact that the time had come for him to resolve himself into a singular Committee of Ways and Means to provide against the coming rigor. And therefore he moved uneasily on his bench.

The hibernatorial ambitions of Soapy were not of the highest. In them were no considerations of Mediterranean cruises, of soporific Southern skies or drifting in the Vesuvian Bay. Three months on the Island was what his soul craved. Three months of assured board and bed and congenial company, safe from Boreas and bluecoats, seemed to Soapy the essence of things desirable.

For years the hospitable Blackwell's had been his winter quarters. Just as his more fortunate fellow New Yorkers had bought their tickets to Palm Beach and the Riviera each winter, so Soapy had made his humble arrangements for his annual hegira to the Island. And now the time was come. On the previous night three Sabbath newspapers, distributed beneath his coat, about his ankles and over his lap, had failed to repulse the cold as he slept on his bench near the spurting fountain in the ancient square. So the Island loomed big and timely in Soapy's mind. He scorned the provisions made in the name of charity for the city's dependents. In Soapy's opinion the Law was more benign than Philanthropy. There was an endless round of institutions, municipal and eleemosynary, on which he might set out and receive lodging and food accordant with the simple life. But to one of Soapy's proud spirit the gifts of charity are encumbered. If not in coin you must pay in humiliation of spirit for every benefit received at the hands of philanthropy. As Cæsar had his Brutus, every bed of charity must have its toll of a bath, every loaf of bread its compensation of a private and personal inquisition. Wherefore it is better to be a guest of the law, which, though conducted by rules, does not meddle unduly with a gentleman's private affairs.

Soapy, having decided to go to the Island, at once set about accomplishing his desire. There were many easy ways of doing this. The pleasantest was to dine luxuriously at some expensive restaurant; and then, after declaring insolvency, be handed over quietly and without uproar to a policeman. An accommodating magistrate would do the rest.

Soapy left his bench and strolled out of the square and across the level sea of asphalt, where Broadway and Fifth Avenue flow together. Up Broadway he turned, and halted at a glittering café, where are gathered together nightly the choicest products of the grape, the silkworm, and the protoplasm.

Soapy had confidence in himself from the lowest button of his vest upward. He was shaven, and his coat was decent and his neat black, ready-tied four-in-hand had been presented to him by a lady missionary on Thanksgiving Day. If he could reach a table in the restaurant unsuspected success would be his. The

portion of him that would show above the table would raise no doubt in the waiter's mind. A roasted mallard duck, thought Soapy, would be about the thing — with a bottle of Chablis, and then Camembert, a demi-tasse and a cigar. One dollar for the cigar would be enough. The total would not be so high as to call forth any supreme manifestation of revenge from the café management; and yet the meat would leave him filled and happy for the journey to his winter refuge.

But as Soapy set foot inside the restaurant door the head waiter's eye fell upon his frayed trousers and decadent shoes. Strong and ready hands turned him about and conveyed him in silence and haste to the sidewalk and averted the ignoble fate of the menaced mallard.

Soapy turned off Broadway. It seemed that his route to the coveted Island was not to be an epicurean one. Some other way of entering limbo must be thought of.

At a corner of Sixth Avenue electric lights and cunningly displayed wares behind plate-glass made a shop window conspicuous. Soapy took a cobblestone and dashed it through the glass. People came running around the corner, a policeman in the lead. Soapy stood still, with his hands in his pockets, and smiled at the sight of brass buttons.

"Where's the man that done that?" inquired the officer, excitedly.

"Don't you figure out that I might have had something to do with it?" said Soapy, not without sarcasm, but friendly, as one greets good fortune.

The policeman's mind refused to accept Soapy even as a clue. Men who smash windows do not remain to parley with the law's minions. They take to their heels. The policeman saw a man halfway down the block running to catch a car. With drawn club he joined in the pursuit. Soapy, with disgust in his heart, loafed along, twice unsuccessful.

On the opposite side of the street was a restaurant of no great pretensions. It catered to large appetites and modest purses. Its crockery and atmosphere were thick; its soup and napery thin. Into this place Soapy took his accusive shoes and telltale trousers without challenge. At a table he sat and consumed beefsteak, flapjacks, doughnuts and pie. And then to the waiter he betrayed the fact that the minutest coin and himself were strangers.

"Now, get busy and call a cop," said Soapy. "And don't keep a gentleman waiting."

"No cop for youse," said the waiter, with a voice like butter cakes and an eye like the cherry in a Manhattan cocktail. "Hey, Con!"

Neatly upon his left ear on the callous pavement two waiters pitched Soapy. He arose joint by joint, as a carpenter's rule opens, and beat the dust from his clothes. Arrest seemed but a rosy dream. The Island seemed very far away. A policeman who stood before a drug store two doors away laughed and walked down the street.

Five blocks Soapy travelled before his courage permitted him to woo capture again. This time the opportunity presented what he fatuously termed to himself a "cinch." A young woman of a modest and pleasing guise was standing before a show window gazing with sprightly interest at its display of shaving mugs and inkstands, and two yards from the window a large policeman of severe demeanor leaned against a water plug.

It was Soapy's design to assume the role of the despicable and execrated "masher." The refined and elegant appearance of his victim and the contiguity of the conscientious cop encouraged him to believe that he would soon feel the pleasant official clutch upon his arm that would insure his winter quarters on the right little, tight little isle.

Soapy straightened the lady missionary's ready-made tie, dragged his shrinking cuffs into the open, set his hat at a killing cant and sidled toward the young woman. He made eyes at her, was taken with sudden coughs and "hems," smiled, smirked and went brazenly through the impudent and contemptible litany of the "masher." With half an eye Soapy saw that the policeman was watching him fixedly. The young woman moved away a few steps, and again bestowed her absorbed attention upon the shaving mugs. Soapy followed, boldly stepping to her side, raised his hat and said:

"Ah there, Bedelia! Don't you want to come and play in my yard?"

The policeman was still looking. The persecuted young woman had but to beckon a finger and Soapy would be practically en route for his insular haven. Already he imagined he could feel the cozy warmth of the station-house. The young woman faced him and, stretching out a hand, caught Soapy's coat sleeve.

"Sure, Mike," she said, joyfully, "if you'll blow me to a pail of suds. I'd have spoke to you sooner, but the cop was watching."

With the young woman playing the clinging ivy to his oak Soapy walked past the policeman overcome with gloom. He seemed doomed to liberty.

At the next corner he shook off his companion and ran. He halted in the district where by night are found the lightest streets, hearts, vows and librettos. Women in furs and men in greatcoats moved gaily in the wintry air. A sudden fear seized Soapy that some dreadful enchantment had rendered him immune to arrest. The thought brought a little of panic upon it, and when he came upon another policeman lounging grandly in front of a transplendent theatre he caught at the immediate straw of "disorderly conduct."

On the sidewalk Soapy began to yell drunken gibberish at the top of his harsh voice. He danced, howled, raved, and otherwise disturbed the welkin.

The policeman twirled his club, turned his back to Soapy and remarked to a citizen:

" 'Tis one of them Yale lads celebratin' the goose egg they give to the Hartford College. Noisy; but no harm. We've instructions to lave them be."

Disconsolate, Soapy ceased his unavailing racket. Would never a policeman

lay hands on him? In his fancy the Island seemed an unattainable Arcadia. He buttoned his thin coat against the chilling wind.

In a cigar store he saw a well-dressed man lighting a cigar at a swinging light. His silk umbrella he had set by the door on entering. Soapy stepped inside, secured the umbrella and sauntered off with it slowly. The man at the cigar light followed hastily.

"My umbrella," he said, sternly.

"Oh, is it?" sneered Soapy, adding insult to petit larceny. "Well, why don't you call a policeman? I took it. Your umbrella! Why don't you call a cop? There stands one on the corner."

The umbrella owner slowed his steps. Soapy did likewise, with a presentiment that luck would again run against him. The policeman looked at the two curiously.

"Of course," said the umbrella man — "that is — well, you know how these mistakes occur — I — if it's your umbrella I hope you'll excuse me — I picked it up this morning in a restaurant — If you recognize it as yours, why — I hope you'll ——"

"Of course it's mine," said Soapy, viciously.

The ex-umbrella man retreated. The policeman hurried to assist a tall blonde in an opera cloak across the street in front of a street car that was approaching two blocks away.

Soapy walked eastward through a street damaged by improvements. He hurled the umbrella wrathfully into an excavation. He muttered against the men who wear helmets and carry clubs. Because he wanted to fall into their clutches, they seemed to regard him as a king who could do no wrong.

At length Soapy reached one of the avenues to the east where the glitter and turmoil was but faint. He set his face down this toward Madison Square, for the homing instinct survives even when the home is a park bench.

But on an unusually quiet corner Soapy came to a standstill. Here was an old church, quaint and rambling and gabled. Through one violet-stained window a soft light glowed, where, no doubt, the organist loitered over the keys, making sure of his mastery of the coming Sabbath anthem. For there drifted out to Soapy's ears sweet music that caught and held him transfixed against the convolutions of the iron fence.

The moon was above, lustrous and serene; vehicles and pedestrians were few; sparrows twittered sleepily in the eaves — for a little while the scene might have been a country churchyard. And the anthem that the organist played cemented Soapy to the iron fence, for he had known it well in the days when his life contained such things as mothers and roses and ambitions and friends and immaculate thoughts and collars.

The conjunction of Soapy's receptive state of mind and the influences about the old church wrought a sudden and wonderful change in his soul. He viewed

with swift horror the pit into which he had tumbled, the degraded days, unworthy desires, dead hopes, wrecked faculties and base motives that made up his existence.

And also in a moment his heart responded thrillingly to this novel mood. An instantaneous and strong impulse moved him to battle with his desperate fate. He would pull himself out of the mire; he would make a man of himself again; he would conquer the evil that had taken possession of him. There was time; he was comparatively young yet: he would resurrect his old eager ambitions and pursue them without faltering. Those solemn but sweet organ notes had set up a revolution in him. To-morrow he would go into the roaring downtown district and find work. A fur importer had once offered him a place as driver. He would find him to-morrow and ask for the position. He would be somebody in the world. He would —

Soapy felt a hand laid on his arm. He looked quickly around into the broad face of a policeman.

"What are you doin' here?" asked the officer.

"Nothin'," said Soapy.

"Then come along," said the policeman.

"Three months on the Island," said the Magistrate in the Police Court the next morning.

#### QUESTIONS

1. In what paragraph does the action of this story begin? What do the preceding paragraphs contribute?
2. What was Soapy's problem? List his unsuccessful attempts to solve it.
3. State in a sentence the "twist" at the end. Generalize this sentence and work out a different plot with this same "twist" (e.g., when a boy finally decides he doesn't want to date the girl he's been trying to get, he finds himself stuck with her).

*Anton Chekhov, great nineteenth-century Russian writer, created a distinctive type of short story which emphasizes character and atmosphere rather than plot. Many twentieth-century writers have imitated these stories which "instead of moving toward a definite conclusion . . . are apt to trail off or drop to an anti-climax." But Chekhov also showed a rare "understanding of the complexities . . . of the heart," perhaps gained from his practice as a Moscow physician. He organized famine relief and preventive measures against cholera in stricken provinces, and had his practice largely among the poor, without compensation. Not long before his early death from tuberculosis he wrote his famous plays, The Sea Gull (1896) and The Cherry Orchard (1904). He wrote over seven hundred short stories.*

## I

It was a dark autumn night. The old banker was pacing from corner to corner of his study, recalling to his mind the party he gave in the autumn fifteen years before. There were many clever people at the party and much interesting conversation. They talked among other things of capital punishment. The guests, among them not a few scholars and journalists, for the most part disapproved of capital punishment. They found it obsolete as a means of punishment, unfitted to a Christian State and immoral. Some of them thought that capital punishment should be replaced universally by life-imprisonment.

"I don't agree with you," said the host. "I myself have experienced neither capital punishment nor life-imprisonment, but if one may judge *a priori*, then in my opinion capital punishment is more moral and more humane than imprisonment. Execution kills instantly, life-imprisonment kills by degrees. Who is the more humane executioner, one who kills you in a few seconds or one who draws the life out of you incessantly, for years?"

"They're both equally immoral," remarked one of the guests, "because their purpose is the same, to take away life. The State is not God. It has no right to take away that which it cannot give back, if it should so desire."

Among the company was a lawyer, a young man of about twenty-five. On being asked his opinion, he said:

"Capital punishment and life-imprisonment are equally immoral; but if I were offered the choice between them, I would certainly choose the second. It's better to live somehow than not to live at all."

There ensued a lively discussion. The banker, who was then younger and more nervous, suddenly lost his temper, banged his fist on the table and, turning to the young lawyer, cried out:

"It's a lie. I bet you two millions you wouldn't stick in a cell even for five years."

"If you mean it seriously," replied the lawyer, "then I bet I'll stay not five, but fifteen."

"Fifteen! Done!" cried the banker. "Gentlemen, I stake two millions."

"Agreed. You stake two millions, I my freedom," said the lawyer.

So this wild, ridiculous bet came to pass. The banker, who at that time had too many millions to count, spoiled and capricious, was beside himself with rapture. During supper he said to the lawyer jokingly:

"Come to your senses, young man, before it's too late. Two millions are nothing to me, but you stand to lose three or four of the best years of your life. I say three or four, because you'll never stick it out any longer. Don't forget either, you unhappy man, that voluntary is much heavier than enforced imprisonment. The idea that you have the right to free yourself at any moment will poison the whole of your life in the cell. I pity you."

And now the banker, pacing from corner to corner, recalled all this and asked himself:

"Why did I make this bet? What's the good? The lawyer loses fifteen years of his life and I throw away two millions. Will it convince people that capital punishment is worse or better than imprisonment for life? No, no! all stuff and rubbish. On my part, it was the caprice of a well-fed man; on the lawyer's, pure greed of gold."

He recollected further what happened after the evening party. It was decided that the lawyer must undergo his imprisonment under the strictest observation, in a garden wing of the banker's house. It was agreed that during the period he would be deprived of the right to cross the threshold, to see living people, to hear human voices, and to receive letters and newspapers. He was permitted to have a musical instrument, to read books, to write letters, to drink wine and smoke tobacco. By the agreement he could communicate, but only in silence, with the outside world through a little window specially constructed for this purpose. Everything necessary, books, music, wine, he could receive in any quantity by sending a note through the window. The agreement provided for all the minutest details, which made the confinement strictly solitary, and it obliged the lawyer to remain exactly fifteen years from twelve o'clock of November 14th, 1870, to twelve o'clock of November 14th, 1885. The least attempt on his part to violate the conditions, to escape if only for two minutes before the time freed the banker from the obligation to pay him the two millions.

During the first year of imprisonment, the lawyer, as far as it was possible to judge from his short notes, suffered terribly from loneliness and boredom. From his wing day and night came the sound of the piano. He rejected wine and tobacco. "Wine," he wrote, "excites desires, and desires are the chief foes of a prisoner; besides, nothing is more boring than to drink good wine alone,



and tobacco spoils the air in his room." During the first year the lawyer was sent books of a light character; novels with a complicated love interest, stories of crime and fantasy, comedies, and so on.

In the second year the piano was heard no longer and the lawyer asked only for classics. In the fifth year, music was heard again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him said that during the whole of that year he was only eating, drinking, and lying on his bed. He yawned often and talked angrily to himself. Books he did not read. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write. He would write for a long time and tear it all up in the morning. More than once he was heard to weep.

In the second half of the sixth year, the prisoner began zealously to study languages, philosophy, and history. He fell on these subjects so hungrily that the banker hardly had time to get books enough for him. In the space of four years about six hundred volumes were bought at his request. It was while that passion lasted that the banker received the following letter from the prisoner: "My dear gaoler, I am writing these lines in six languages. Show them to experts. Let them read them. If they do not find one single mistake, I beg you to give orders to have a gun fired off in the garden. By the noise I shall know that my efforts have not been in vain. The geniuses of all ages and countries speak in different languages; but in them all burns the same flame. Oh, if you knew my heavenly happiness now that I can understand them!" The prisoner's desire was fulfilled. Two shots were fired in the garden by the banker's order.

Later on, after the tenth year, the lawyer sat immovable before his table and read only the New Testament. The banker found it strange that a man who in four years had mastered six hundred erudite volumes, should have spent nearly a year in reading one book, easy to understand and by no means thick. The New Testament was then replaced by the history of religions and theology.

During the last two years of his confinement the prisoner read an extraordinary amount, quite haphazard. Now he would apply himself to the natural sciences, then he would read Byron or Shakespeare. Notes used to come from him in which he asked to be sent at the same time a book on chemistry, a text-book of medicine, a novel, and some treatise on philosophy or theology. He read as though he were swimming in the sea among broken pieces of wreckage, and in his desire to save his life was eagerly grasping one piece after another.

## II

The banker recalled all this, and thought:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock he receives his freedom. Under the agreement, I shall have to pay him two millions. If I pay, it's all over with me. I am ruined for ever . . ."

Fifteen years before he had too many millions to count, but now he was afraid to ask himself which he had more of, money or debts. Gambling on the

Stock-Exchange, risky speculation, and the recklessness of which he could not rid himself even in old age, had gradually brought his business to decay; and the fearless, self-confident, proud man of business had become an ordinary banker, trembling at every rise and fall in the market.

"That cursed bet," murmured the old man, clutching his head in despair. . . . Why didn't the man die? He's only forty years old. He will take away my last farthing, marry, enjoy life, gamble on the Exchange, and I will look on like an envious beggar and hear the same words from him every day: 'I'm obliged to you for the happiness of my life. Let me help you.' No, it's too much! The only escape from bankruptcy and disgrace — is that the man should die."

The clock had just struck three. The banker was listening. In the house every one was asleep, and one could hear only the frozen trees whining outside the windows. Trying to make no sound, he took out of his safe the key of the door which had not been opened for fifteen years, put on his overcoat, and went out of the house. The garden was dark and cold. It was raining. A damp, penetrating wind howled in the garden and gave the trees no rest. Though he strained his eyes, the banker could see neither the ground, nor the white statues, nor the garden wing, nor the trees. Approaching the garden wing, he called the watchman twice. There was no answer. Evidently the watchman had taken shelter from the bad weather and was now asleep somewhere in the kitchen or the greenhouse.

"If I have the courage to fulfill my intention," thought the old man, "the suspicion will fall on the watchman first of all."

In the darkness he groped for the steps and the door and entered the hall of the garden wing, then poked his way into a narrow passage and struck a match. Not a soul was there. Some one's bed, with no bedclothes on it, stood there, and an iron stove loomed dark in the corner. The seals on the door that led into the prisoner's room were unbroken.

When the match went out, the old man, trembling from agitation, peeped into the little window.

In the prisoner's room a candle was burning dimly. The prisoner himself sat by the table. Only his back, the hair on his head and his hands were visible. Open books were strewn about on the table, the two chairs, and on the carpet near the table.

Five minutes passed and the prisoner never once stirred. Fifteen years' confinement had taught him to sit motionless. The banker tapped on the window with his finger, but the prisoner made no movement in reply. Then the banker cautiously tore the seals from the door and put the key into the lock. The rusty lock gave a hoarse groan and the door creaked. The banker expected instantly to hear a cry of surprise and the sound of steps. Three minutes passed and it was as quiet inside as it had been before. He made up his mind to enter.

Before the table sat a man, unlike an ordinary human being. It was a skele-

ton, with tight-drawn skin, with long curly hair like a woman's, and a shaggy beard. The colour of his face was yellow, of an earthy shade; the cheeks were sunken, the back long and narrow, and the hand upon which he leaned his hairy head was so lean and skinny that it was painful to look upon. His hair was already silvering with grey, and no one who glanced at the senile emaciation of the face would have believed that he was only forty years old. On the table, before his bended head, lay a sheet of paper on which something was written in a tiny hand.

"Poor devil," thought the banker, "he's asleep and probably seeing millions in his dreams. I have only to take and throw this half-dead thing on the bed, smother him a moment with the pillow, and the most careful examination will find no trace of unnatural death. But, first, let us read what he has written here."

The banker took the sheet from the table and read:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock midnight, I shall obtain my freedom and the right to mix with people. But before I leave this room and see the sun I think it necessary to say a few words to you. On my own clear conscience and before God who sees me I declare to you that I despise freedom, life, health, and all that your books call the blessings of the world.

"For fifteen years I have diligently studied earthly life. True, I saw neither the earth nor the people, but in your books I drank fragrant wine, sang songs, hunted deer and wild boar in the forests, loved women. . . . And beautiful women, like clouds ethereal, created by the magic of your poets' genius, visited me by night and whispered to me wonderful tales, which made my head drunken. In your books I climbed the summits of Elbruz and Mont Blanc and saw from there how the sun rose in the morning, and in the evening suffused the sky, the ocean and the mountain ridges with a purple gold. I saw from there how above me lightnings glimmered cleaving the clouds; I saw green forests, fields, rivers, lakes, cities; I heard sirens singing, and the playing of the pipes of Pan; I touched the wings of beautiful devils who came flying to me to speak of God. . . . In your books I cast myself into bottomless abysses, worked miracles, burned cities to the ground, preached new religions, conquered whole countries. . . .

"Your books gave me wisdom. All that unwearying human thought created in the centuries is compressed to a little lump in my skull. I know that I am cleverer than you all.

"And I despise your books, despise all worldly blessings and wisdom. Everything is void, frail, visionary and delusive as a mirage. Though you be proud and wise and beautiful, yet will death wipe you from the face of the earth like the mice underground; and your posterity, your history, and the immortality of your men of genius will be as frozen slag, burnt down together with the terrestrial globe.

"You are mad, and gone the wrong way. You take falsehood for truth and ugliness for beauty. You would marvel if suddenly apple and orange trees should

bear frogs and lizards instead of fruit, and if roses should begin to breathe the odour of a sweating horse. So do I marvel at you, who have bartered heaven for earth. I do not want to understand you.

"That I may show you in deed my contempt for that by which you live, I waive the two millions of which I once dreamed as of paradise, and which I now despise. That I may deprive myself of my right to them, I shall come out from here five minutes before the stipulated term, and thus shall violate the agreement."

When he had read, the banker put the sheet on the table, kissed the head of the strange man, and began to weep. He went out of the wing. Never at any other time, not even after his terrible losses on the Exchange, had he felt such contempt for himself as now. Coming home, he lay down on his bed, but agitation and tears kept him a long time from sleeping. . . .

The next morning the poor watchman came running to him and told him that they had seen the man who lived in the wing climb through the window into the garden. He had gone to the gate and disappeared. The banker instantly went with his servants to the wing and established the escape of his prisoner. To avoid unnecessary rumours he took the paper with the renunciation from the table and, on his return, locked it in his safe.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Trace the chronology in the telling of this story. What year is it when the story begins?
2. Quote transitional phrases used to introduce flashbacks.
3. What are the characters' names?
4. What do you think would have happened if the banker had agreed to be imprisoned, for money, in place of the lawyer?
5. What book did the lawyer read for almost a year?
6. Is the ending plausible? Is your sympathy with the banker or the lawyer? Why?

*Joseph Conrad (Jozef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski) writes memorably of the sea in his novels because, after leaving his native Poland at the age of sixteen, he spent twenty years as sailor and officer on voyages in the Mediterranean, to Australia and the East, and on the Congo. "Youth" narrates his voyage on the Palestine (changed to Judea in the story) to Bangkok, 1881-83. After 1894, Conrad said, "I understood that I had done with the sea, and that henceforth I had to be a writer." He settled in England and, in the language he did not learn until he was grown, produced his masterpieces: Lord Jim (1900), "Typhoon" (1902), Nostromo (1904), and many others. "You will discover, if you read my books," he once observed, "how I am writing towards some fixed event or scene I can see."*

This could have occurred nowhere but in England, where men and sea interpenetrate, so to speak — the sea entering into the life of most men, and the men knowing something or everything about the sea, in the way of amusement, of travel, or of bread-winning.

We were sitting round a mahogany table that reflected the bottle, the claret-glasses, and our faces as we leaned on our elbows. There was a director of companies, an accountant, a lawyer, Marlow, and myself. The director had been a Conway boy, the accountant had served four years at sea, the lawyer — a fine crusted Tory, High Churchman, the best of old fellows, the soul of honor — had been chief officer in the P. & O. service in the good old days when mail-boats were square-rigged at least on two masts, and used to come down the China Sea before a fair monsoon with stun'-sails set alow and aloft. We all began life in the merchant service. Between the five of us there was the strong bond of the sea, and also the fellowship of the craft, which no amount of enthusiasm for yachting, cruising, and so on can give, since one is only the amusement of life and the other is life itself.

Marlow (at least I think that is how he spelt his name) told the story, or rather the chronicle, of a voyage:

"Yes, I have seen a little of the Eastern seas; but what I remember best is my first voyage there. You fellows know there are those voyages that seem ordered for the illustration of life, that might stand for a symbol of existence. You fight, work, sweat, nearly kill yourself, sometimes do kill yourself, trying to accomplish something — and you can't. Not from any fault of yours. You simply can do nothing, neither great nor little — not a thing in the world — not even marry an old maid, or get a wretched 600-ton cargo of coal to its port of destination.

"It was altogether a memorable affair. It was my first voyage to the East, and my first voyage as second mate; it was also my skipper's first command. You'll admit it was time. He was sixty if a day; a little man, with a broad, not very straight back, with bowed shoulders and one leg more bandy than the other, he had that queer twisted-about appearance you see so often in men who work in the fields. He had a nut-cracker face — chin and nose trying to come together over a sunken mouth — and it was framed in iron-gray fluffy hair, that looked like a chin strap of cotton-wool sprinkled with coal-dust. And he had blue eyes in that old face of his, which were amazingly like a boy's, with that candid expression some quite common men preserve to the end of their days by a rare internal gift of simplicity of heart and rectitude of soul. What induced him to accept me was a wonder. I had come out of a crack Australian clipper, where I had been third officer, and he seemed to have a prejudice against crack clippers as aristocratic and high-toned. He said to me, 'You know, in this ship you will have to work.' I said I had to work in every ship I had ever been in. 'Ah, but this is different, and you gentlemen out of them big ships; . . . but there! I dare say you will do. Join to-morrow.'

"I joined to-morrow. It was twenty-two years ago; and I was just twenty. How time passes! It was one of the happiest days of my life. Fancy! Second mate for the first time — a really responsible officer! I wouldn't have thrown up my new billet for a fortune. The mate looked me over carefully. He was also an old chap, but of another stamp. He had a Roman nose, a snow-white, long beard, and his name was Mahon, but he insisted that it should be pronounced Mann. He was well connected; yet there was something wrong with his luck, and he had never got on.

"As to the captain, he had been for years in coasters, then in the Mediterranean, and last in the West Indian trade. He had never been round the Capes. He could just write a kind of sketchy hand, and didn't care for writing at all. Both were thorough good seamen of course, and between those two old chaps I felt like a small boy between two grandfathers.

"The ship also was old. Her name was the *Judea*. Queer name, isn't it? She belonged to a man Wilmer, Wilcox — some name like that; but he has been bankrupt and dead these twenty years or more, and his name don't matter. She had been laid up in Shadwell basin for ever so long. You can imagine her state. She was all rust, dust, grime — soot aloft, dirt on deck. To me it was like coming out of a palace into a ruined cottage. She was about 400 tons, had a primitive windlass, wooden latches on the doors, not a bit of brass about her, and a big square stern. There was on it, below her name in big letters, a lot of scroll work, with the gilt off, and some sort of a coat of arms, with the motto 'Do or Die' underneath. I remember it took my fancy immensely. There was a touch of romance in it, something that made me love the old thing — something that appealed to my youth!

"We left London in ballast — sand ballast — to load a cargo of coal in a northern port for Bankok. Bankok! I thrilled. I had been six years at sea, but had only seen Melbourne and Sydney, very good places, charming places in their way — but Bankok!

"We worked out of the Thames under canvas, with a North Sea pilot on board. His name was Jermyn, and he dodged all day long about the galley drying his handkerchief before the stove. Apparently he never slept. He was a dismal man, with a perpetual tear sparkling at the end of his nose, who either had been in trouble, or was in trouble, or expected to be in trouble — couldn't be happy unless something went wrong. He mistrusted my youth, my common-sense, and my seamanship, and made a point of showing it in a hundred little ways. I dare say he was right. It seems to me I knew very little then, and I know not much more now; but I cherish a hate for that Jermyn to this day.

"We were a week working up as far as Yarmouth Roads, and then we got into a gale — the famous October gale of twenty-two years ago. It was wind, lightning, sleet, snow, and a terrific sea. We were flying light, and you may imagine how bad it was when I tell you we had smashed bulwarks and a flooded deck. On the second night she shifted her ballast into the lee bow, and by that time we had been blown off somewhere on the Dogger Bank. There was nothing for it but go below with shovels and try to right her, and there we were in that vast hold, gloomy like a cavern, the tallow dips stuck and flickering on the beams, the gale howling above, the ship tossing about like mad on her side; there we all were, Jermyn, the captain, everyone, hardly able to keep our feet, engaged on that gravedigger's work, and trying to toss shovelfuls of wet sand up to windward. At every tumble of the ship you could see vaguely in the dim light men falling down with a great flourish of shovels. One of the ship's boys (we had two), impressed by the weirdness of the scene, wept as if his heart would break. We could hear him blubbing somewhere in the shadows.

"On the third day the gale died out, and by-and-by a north-country tug picked us up. We took sixteen days in all to get from London to the Tyne! When we got into dock we had lost our turn for loading, and they hauled us off to a tier where we remained for a month. Mrs. Beard (the captain's name was Beard) came from Colchester to see the old man. She lived on board. The crew of runners had left, and there remained only the officers, one boy, and the steward, a mulatto who answered to the name of Abraham. Mrs. Beard was an old woman, with a face all wrinkled and ruddy like a winter apple, and the figure of a young girl. She caught sight of me once, sewing on a button, and insisted on having my shirts to repair. This was something different from the captains' wives I had known on board crack clippers. When I brought her the shirts, she said: 'And the socks? They want mending, I am sure, and John's — Captain Beard's — things are all in order now. I would be glad of something to do.' Bless the old woman. She overhauled my outfit for me, and meantime I read for

the first time 'Sartor Resartus' and Burnaby's 'Ride to Khiva.' I didn't understand much of the first then; but I remember I preferred the soldier to the philosopher at the time; a preference which life has only confirmed. One was a man, and the other was either more — or less. However, they are both dead, and Mrs. Beard is dead, and youth, strength, genius, thoughts, achievements, simple hearts — all die. . . . No matter.

"They loaded us at last. We shipped a crew. Eight able seamen and two boys. We hauled off one evening to the buoys at the dock-gates, ready to go out, and with a fair prospect of beginning the voyage next day. Mrs. Beard was to start for home by a late train. When the ship was fast we went to tea. We sat rather silent through the meal — Mahon, the old couple, and I. I finished first, and slipped away for a smoke, my cabin being in a deck-house just against the poop. It was high water, blowing fresh with a drizzle; the double dock-gates were opened, and the steam colliers were going in and out in the darkness with their lights burning bright, a great plashing of propellers, rattling of winches, and a lot of hailing on the pier-heads. I watched the procession of head-lights gliding high and of green lights gliding low in the night, when suddenly a red gleam flashed at me, vanished, came into view again, and remained. The fore-end of a steamer loomed up close. I shouted down the cabin, 'Come up, quick!' and then heard a startled voice saying afar in the dark, 'Stop her, sir.' A bell jingled. Another voice cried warningly, 'We are going right into that bark, sir.' The answer to this was a gruff 'All right,' and the next thing was a heavy crash as the steamer struck a glancing blow with the bluff of her bow about our fore-rigging. There was a moment of confusion, yelling, and running about. Steam roared. Then somebody was heard saying, 'All clear, sir.' . . . 'Are you all right?' asked the gruff voice. I had jumped forward to see the damage, and hailed back, 'I think so.' 'Easy astern,' said the gruff voice. A bell jingled. 'What steamer is that?' screamed Mahon. By that time she was no more to us than a bulky shadow maneuvering a little way off. They shouted at us some name — a woman's name, Miranda or Melissa — or some such thing. 'This means another month in this beastly hole,' said Mahon to me, as we peered with lamps about the splintered bulwarks and broken braces. 'But where's the captain?'

"We had not heard or seen anything of him all that time. We went aft to look. A doleful voice arose hailing somewhere in the middle of the dock, 'Judea ahoy!' . . . How the devil did he get there? . . . 'Hallo!' we shouted. 'I am adrift in our boat without oars,' he cried. A belated waterman offered his services, and Mahon struck a bargain with him for half-a-crown to tow our skipper alongside; but it was Mrs. Beard that came up the ladder first. They had been floating about the dock in that mizzly cold rain for nearly an hour. I was never so surprised in my life.

"It appears that when he heard my shout 'Come up,' he understood at once what was the matter, caught up his wife, ran on deck, and across, and down into



our boat, which was fast to the ladder. Not bad for a sixty-year-old. Just imagine that old fellow saving heroically in his arms that old woman — the woman of his life. He set her down on a thwart, and was ready to climb back on board when the painter came adrift somehow, and away they went together. Of course in the confusion we did not hear him shouting. He looked abashed. She said cheerfully, 'I suppose it does not matter my losing the train now?' 'No, Jenny — you go below and get warm,' he growled. Then to us: 'A sailor has no business with a wife — I say. There I was, out of the ship. Well, no harm done this time. Let's go and look at what that fool of a steamer smashed.'

"It wasn't much, but it delayed us three weeks. At the end of that time, the captain being engaged with his agents, I carried Mrs. Beard's bag to the railway-station and put her all comfy into a third-class carriage. She lowered the window to say, 'You are a good young man. If you see John — Captain Beard — without his muffler at night, just remind him from me to keep his throat well wrapped up.' 'Certainly, Mrs. Beard,' I said. 'You are a good young man; I noticed how attentive you are to John — to Captain ——' The train pulled out suddenly; I took my cap off to the old woman: I never saw her again. . . . Pass the bottle.

"We went to sea next day. When we made that start for Bankok we had been already three months out of London. We had expected to be a fortnight or so — at the outside.

"It was January, and the weather was beautiful — the beautiful sunny winter weather that has more charm than in the summer-time, because it is unexpected, and crisp, and you know it won't, it can't, last long. It's like a windfall, like a godsend, like an unexpected piece of luck.

"It lasted all down the North Sea, all down Channel; and it lasted till we were three hundred miles or so to the westward of the Lizards: then the wind went round to the sou'west and began to pipe up. In two days it blew a gale. The *Judea*, hove to, wallowed on the Atlantic like an old candlebox. It blew day after day: it blew with spite, without interval, without mercy, without rest. The world was nothing but an immensity of great foaming waves rushing at us, under a sky low enough to touch with the hand and dirty like a smoked ceiling. In the stormy space surrounding us there was as much flying spray as air. Day after day and night after night there was nothing round the ship but the howl of the wind, the tumult of the sea, the noise of water pouring over her deck. There was no rest for her and no rest for us. She tossed, she pitched, she stood on her head, she sat on her tail, she rolled, she groaned, and we had to hold on while on deck and cling to our bunks when below, in a constant effort of body and worry of mind.

"One night Mahon spoke through the small window of my berth. It opened right into my very bed, and I was lying there sleepless, in my boots, feeling as though I had not slept for years, and could not if I tried. He said excitedly —

“‘You got the sounding-rod in here, Marlow? I can’t get the pumps to suck. By God! it’s no child’s play.’

“I gave him the sounding-rod and lay down again, trying to think of various things — but I thought only of the pumps. When I came on deck they were still at it, and my watch relieved at the pumps. By the light of the lantern brought on deck to examine the sounding-rod I caught a glimpse of their weary, serious faces. We pumped all the four hours. We pumped all night, all day, all the week, — watch and watch. She was working herself loose, and leaked badly — not enough to drown us at once, but enough to kill us with the work at the pumps. And while we pumped the ship was going from us piecemeal: the bulwarks went, the stanchions were torn out, the ventilators smashed, the cabin-door burst in. There was not a dry spot in the ship. She was being gutted bit by bit. The long-boat changed, as if by magic, into matchwood where she stood in her gripes. I had lashed her myself, and was rather proud of my handiwork, which had withstood so long the malice of the sea. And we pumped. And there was no break in the weather. The sea was white like a sheet of foam, like a caldron of boiling milk; there was not a break in the clouds, no — not the size of a man’s hand — no, not for so much as ten seconds. There was for us no sky, there were for us no stars, no sun, no universe — nothing but angry clouds and an infuriated sea. We pumped watch and watch, for dear life; and it seemed to last for months, for years, for all eternity, as though we had been dead and gone to a hell for sailors. We forgot the day of the week, the name of the month, what year it was, and whether we had ever been ashore. The sails blew away, she lay broadside on under a weather-cloth, the ocean poured over her, and we did not care. We turned those handles, and had the eyes of idiots. As soon as we had crawled on deck I used to take a round turn with a rope about the men, the pumps, and the mainmast, and we turned, we turned incessantly, with the water to our waists, to our necks, over our heads. It was all one. We had forgotten how it felt to be dry.

“And there was somewhere in me the thought: By Jove! this is the deuce of an adventure — something you read about; and it is my first voyage as second mate — and I am only twenty — and here I am lasting it out as well as any of these men, and keeping my chaps up to the mark. I was pleased. I would not have given up the experience for worlds. I had moments of exultation. Whenever the old dismantled craft pitched heavily with her counter high in the air, she seemed to me to throw up, like an appeal, like a defiance, like a cry to the clouds without mercy, the words written on her stern: ‘*Judea, London. Do or Die.*’

“O youth! The strength of it, the faith of it, the imagination of it! To me she was not an old rattle-trap carting about the world a lot of coal for a freight — to me she was the endeavor, the test, the trial of life. I think of her with pleasure, with affection, with regret — as you would think of someone dead you have loved. I shall never forget her. . . . Pass the bottle.

"One night when tied to the mast, as I explained, we were pumping on, deafened with the wind, and without spirit enough in us to wish ourselves dead, a heavy sea crashed aboard and swept clean over us. As soon as I got my breath I shouted, as in duty bound, 'Keep on, boys!' when suddenly I felt something hard floating on deck strike the calf of my leg. I made a grab at it and missed. It was so dark we could not see each other's faces within a foot — you understand.

"After that thump the ship kept quiet for a while, and the thing, whatever it was, struck my leg again. This time I caught it — and it was a sauce-pan. At first, being stupid with fatigue and thinking of nothing but the pumps, I did not understand what I had in my hand. Suddenly it dawned upon me, and I shouted, 'Boys, the house on deck is gone. Leave this, and let's look for the cook.'

"There was a deck-house forward, which contained the galley, the cook's berth, and the quarters of the crew. As we had expected for days to see it swept away, the hands had been ordered to sleep in the cabin — the only safe place in the ship. The steward, Abraham, however, persisted in clinging to his berth, stupidly, like a mule — from sheer fright I believe, like an animal that won't leave a stable falling in an earthquake. So we went to look for him. It was chancing death, since once out of our lashings we were as exposed as if on a raft. But we went. The house was shattered as if a shell had exploded inside. Most of it had gone overboard — stove, men's quarters, and their property, all was gone; but two posts, holding a portion of the bulkhead to which Abraham's bunk was attached, remained as if by a miracle. We groped in the ruins and came upon this, and there he was, sitting in his bunk, surrounded by foam and wreckage, jabbering cheerfully to himself. He was out of his mind; completely and for ever mad, with this sudden shock coming upon the fag-end of his endurance. We snatched him up, lugged him aft, and pitched him head-first down the cabin companion. You understand there was no time to carry him down with infinite precautions and wait to see how he got on. Those below would pick him up at the bottom of the stairs all right. We were in a hurry to go back to the pumps. That business could not wait. A bad leak is an inhuman thing.

"One would think that the sole purpose of that fiendish gale had been to make a lunatic of that poor devil of a mulatto. It eased before morning, and next day the sky cleared, and as the sea went down the leak took up. When it came to bending a fresh set of sails the crew demanded to put back — and really there was nothing else to do. Boats gone, decks swept clean, cabin gutted, men without a stitch but what they stood in, stores spoiled, ship strained. We put her head for home, and — would you believe it? The wind came east right in our teeth. It blew fresh, it blew continuously. We had to beat up every inch of the way, but she did not leak so badly, the water keeping comparatively smooth. Two hours' pumping in every four is no joke — but it kept her afloat as far as Falmouth.

"The good people there live on casualties of the sea, and no doubt were glad to see us. A hungry crowd of shipwrights sharpened their chisels at the sight of that carcass of a ship. And, by Jove! they had pretty pickings off us before they were done. I fancy the owner was already in a tight place. There were delays. Then it was decided to take part of the cargo out and calk her topsides. This was done, the repairs finished, cargo reshipped; a new crew came on board, and we went out — for Bangkok. At the end of a week we were back again. The crew said they weren't going to Bangkok — a hundred and fifty days' passage — in a something hooker that wanted pumping eight hours out of the twenty-four; and the nautical papers inserted again the little paragraph: '*Judea*. Bark. Tyne to Bangkok; coals; put back to Falmouth leaky and with crew refusing duty.'

"There were more delays — more tinkering. The owner came down for a day, and said she was as right as a little fiddle. Poor old Captain Beard looked like the ghost of a Geordie skipper — through the worry and humiliation of it. Remember he was sixty, and it was his first command. Mahon said it was a foolish business, and would end badly. I loved the ship more than ever, and wanted awfully to get to Bangkok. To Bangkok! Magic name, blessed name. Mesopotamia wasn't a patch on it. Remember I was twenty, and it was my first second mate's billet, and the East was waiting for me.

"We went out and anchored in the outer roads with a fresh crew — the third. She leaked worse than ever. It was as if those confounded shipwrights had actually made a hole in her. This time we did not even go outside. The crew simply refused to man the windlass.

"They towed us back to the inner harbor, and we became a fixture, a feature, an institution of the place. People pointed us out to visitors as 'That 'ere bark that's going to Bangkok — has been here six months — put back three times.' On holidays the small boys pulling about in boats would hail, '*Judea*, ahoy!' and if a head showed above the rail shouted, 'Where you bound to? — Bangkok?' and jeered. We were only three on board. The poor old skipper mooned in the cabin. Mahon undertook the cooking, and unexpectedly developed all a Frenchman's genius for preparing nice little messes. I looked languidly after the rigging. We became citizens of Falmouth. Every shopkeeper knew us. At the barber's or tobacconist's they asked familiarly, 'Do you think you will ever get to Bangkok?' Meantime the owner, the underwriters, and the charterers squabbled amongst themselves in London, and our pay went on. . . . Pass the bottle.

"It was horrid. Morally it was worse than pumping for life. It seemed as though we had been forgotten by the world, belonged to nobody, would get nowhere; it seemed that, as if bewitched, we would have to live for ever and ever in that inner harbor, a derision and a byword to generations of long-shore loafers and dishonest boatmen. I obtained three months' pay and a five days' leave, and made a rush for London. It took me a day to get there and pretty well another to come back — but three months' pay went all the same. I don't know

what I did with it. I went to a music-hall, I believe, lunched, dined, and supped in a swell place in Regent Street, and was back to time, with nothing but a complete set of Byron's works and a new railway rug to show for three months' work. The boatman who pulled me off to the ship said: 'Hallo! I thought you had left the old thing. *She* will never get to Bankok.' 'That's all *you* know about it,' I said scornfully — but I didn't like that prophecy at all.

"Suddenly a man, some kind of agent to somebody, appeared with full powers. He had grog blossoms all over his face, an indomitable energy, and was a jolly soul. We leaped into life again. A hulk came alongside, took our cargo, and then we went into dry dock to get our copper stripped. No wonder she leaked. The poor thing, strained beyond endurance by the gale, had, as if in disgust, spat out all the oakum of her lower seams. She was recalked, new coppered, and made as tight as a bottle. We went back to the hulk and reshipped our cargo.

"Then on a fine moonlight night, all the rats left the ship.

"We had been infested with them. They had destroyed our sails, consumed more stores than the crew, affably shared our beds and our dangers, and now, when the ship was made seaworthy, concluded to clear out. I called Mahon to enjoy the spectacle. Rat after rat appeared on our rail, took a last look over his shoulder, and leaped with a hollow thud into the empty hulk. We tried to count them, but soon lost the tale. Mahon said: 'Well, well! don't talk to me about the intelligence of rats. They ought to have left before, when we had that narrow squeak from foundering. There you have the proof how silly is the superstition about them. They leave a good ship for an old rotten hulk, where there is nothing to eat, too, the fools! . . . I don't believe they know what is safe or what is good for them, any more than you or I.'

"And after some more talk we agreed that the wisdom of rats had been grossly overrated, being in fact no greater than that of men.

"The story of the ship was known, by this, all up the Channel from Land's End to the Forelands, and we could get no crew on the south coast. They sent us one all complete from Liverpool, and we left once more — for Bankok.

"We had fair breezes, smooth water right into the tropics, and the old *Judea* lumbered along in the sunshine. When she went eight knots everything cracked aloft, and we tied our caps to our heads; but mostly she strolled on at the rate of three miles an hour. What could you expect? She was tired — that old ship. Her youth was where mine is — where yours is — you fellows who listen to this yarn; and what friend would throw your years and your weariness in your face? We didn't grumble at her. To us aft, at least, it seemed as though we had been born in her, reared in her, had lived in her for ages, had never known any other ship. I would just as soon have abused the old village church at home for not being a cathedral.

"And for me there was also my youth to make me patient. There was all the

East before me, and all life, and the thought that I had been tried in that ship and had come out pretty well. And I thought of men of old who, centuries ago, went that road in ships that sailed no better, to the land of palms, and spices, and yellow sands, and of brown nations ruled by kings more cruel than Nero the Roman and more splendid than Solomon the Jew. The old bark lumbered on, heavy with her age and the burden of her cargo, while I lived the life of youth in ignorance and hope. She lumbered on through an interminable procession of days; and the fresh gilding flashed back at the setting sun, seemed to cry out over the darkening sea the words painted on her stern, 'Judea, London. Do or Die.'

"Then we entered the Indian Ocean and steered northerly for Java Head. The winds were light. Weeks slipped by. She crawled on, do or die, and people at home began to think of posting us as overdue.

"One Saturday evening, I being off duty, the men asked me to give them an extra bucket of water or so — for washing clothes. As I did not wish to screw on the fresh-water pump so late, I went forward whistling, and with a key in my hand to unlock the forepeak scuttle, intending to serve the water out of a spare tank we kept there.

"The smell down below was as unexpected as it was frightful. One would have thought hundreds of paraffin-lamps had been flaring and smoking in that hole for days. I was glad to get out. The man with me coughed and said, 'Funny smell, sir.' I answered negligently, 'It's good for the health, they say,' and walked aft.

"The first thing I did was to put my head down the square of the midship ventilator. As I lifted the lid a visible breath, something like a thin fog, a puff of faint haze, rose from the opening. The ascending air was hot, and had a heavy, sooty, paraffiny smell. I gave one sniff, and put down the lid gently. It was no use choking myself. The cargo was on fire.

"Next day she began to smoke in earnest. You see it was to be expected, for though the coal was of a safe kind, that cargo had been so handled, so broken up with handling, that it looked more like smithy coal than anything else. Then it had been wetted — more than once. It rained all the time we were taking it back from the hulk, and now with this long passage it got heated, and there was another case of spontaneous combustion.

"The captain called us into the cabin. He had a chart spread on the table, and looked unhappy. He said, 'The coast of West Australia is near, but I mean to proceed to our destination. It is the hurricane month too; but we will just keep her head for Bankok, and fight the fire. No more putting back anywhere, if we all get roasted. We will try first to stifle this 'ere damned combustion by want of air.'

"We tried. We battened down everything, and still she smoked. The smoke kept coming out through imperceptible crevices; it forced itself through bulk-

heads and covers; it oozed here and there and everywhere in slender threads, in an invisible film, in an incomprehensible manner. It made its way into the cabin, into the forecabin; it poisoned the sheltered places on the deck, it could be sniffed as high as the mainyard. It was clear that if the smoke came out the air came in. This was disheartening. This combustion refused to be stifled.

"We resolved to try water, and took the hatches off. Enormous volumes of smoke, whitish, yellowish, thick, greasy, misty, choking, ascended as high as the trucks. All hands cleared out aft. Then the poisonous cloud blew away, and we went back to work in a smoke that was no thicker now than that of an ordinary factory chimney.

"We rigged the force pump, got the hose along, and by-and-by it burst. Well, it was as old as the ship — a prehistoric hose, and past repair. Then we pumped with the feeble head-pump, drew water with buckets, and in this way managed in time to pour lots of Indian Ocean into the main hatch. The bright stream flashed in sunshine, fell into a layer of white crawling smoke, and vanished on the black surface of coal. Steam ascended mingling with the smoke. We poured salt water as into a barrel without a bottom. It was our fate to pump in that ship, to pump out of her, to pump into her; and after keeping water out of her to save ourselves from being drowned, we frantically poured water into her to save ourselves from being burnt.

"And she crawled on, do or die, in the serene weather. The sky was a miracle of purity, a miracle of azure. The sea was polished, was blue, was pellucid, was sparkling like a precious stone, extending on all sides, all round to the horizon — as if the whole terrestrial globe had been one jewel, one colossal sapphire, a single gem fashioned into a planet. And on the luster of the great calm waters the *Judea* glided imperceptibly, enveloped in languid and unclean vapors, in a lazy cloud that drifted to leeward, light and slow: a pestiferous cloud defiling the splendor of sea and sky.

"All this time of course we saw no fire. The cargo smoldered at the bottom somewhere. Once Mahon, as we were working side by side, said to me with a queer smile: 'Now, if she only would spring a tidy leak — like that time when we first left the Channel — it would put a stopper on this fire. Wouldn't it?' I remarked irrelevantly, 'Do you remember the rats?'

"We fought the fire and sailed the ship too as carefully as though nothing had been the matter. The steward cooked and attended on us. Of the other twelve men, eight worked while four rested. Everyone took his turn, captain included. There was equality, and if not exactly fraternity, then a deal of good feeling. Sometimes a man, as he dashed a bucketful of water down the hatchway, would yell out, 'Hurrah for Bankok!' and the rest laughed. But generally we were taciturn and serious — and thirsty. Oh! how thirsty! And we had to be careful with the water. Strict allowance. The ship smoked, the sun blazed. . . . Pass the bottle.

"We tried everything. We even made an attempt to dig down to the fire. No good, of course. No man could remain more than a minute below. Mahon, who went first, fainted there, and the man who went to fetch him out did likewise. We lugged them out on deck. Then I leaped down to show how easily it could be done. They had learned wisdom by that time, and contented themselves by fishing for me with a chain-hook tied to a broom-handle, I believe. I did not offer to go and fetch up my shovel, which was left down below.

"Things began to look bad. We put the long-boat into the water. The second boat was ready to swing out. We had also another, a fourteen-foot thing, on davits aft, where it was quite safe.

"Then behold, the smoke suddenly decreased. We redoubled our efforts to flood the bottom of the ship. In two days there was no smoke at all. Everybody was on the broad grin. This was on a Friday. On Saturday no work, but sailing the ship of course was done. The men washed their clothes and their faces for the first time in a fortnight, and had a special dinner given them. They spoke of spontaneous combustion with contempt, and implied *they* were the boys to put out combustions. Somehow we all felt as though we each had inherited a large fortune. But a beastly smell of burning hung about the ship. Captain Beard had hollow eyes and sunken cheeks. I had never noticed so much before how twisted and bowed he was. He and Mahon prowled soberly about hatches and ventilators, sniffing. It struck me suddenly poor Mahon was a very, very old chap. As to me, I was as pleased and proud as though I had helped to win a great naval battle. O! Youth!

"The night was fine. In the morning a homeward-bound ship passed us hull down, — the first we had seen for months; but we were nearing the land at last, Java Head being about 190 miles off, and nearly due north.

"Next day it was my watch on deck from eight to twelve. At breakfast the captain observed, 'It's wonderful how that smell hangs about the cabin.' About ten, the mate being on the poop, I stepped down on the main-deck for a moment. The carpenter's bench stood abaft the mainmast: I leaned against it sucking at my pipe, and the carpenter, a young chap, came to talk to me. He remarked, 'I think we have done very well, haven't we?' and then I perceived with annoyance the fool was trying to tilt the bench. I said curtly, 'Don't, Chips,' and immediately became aware of a queer sensation, of an absurd delusion, — I seemed somehow to be in the air. I heard all round me like a pent-up breath released — as if a thousand giants simultaneously had said Phoo! — and felt a dull concussion which made my ribs ache suddenly. No doubt about it — I was in the air, and my body was describing a short parabola. But short as it was, I had the time to think several thoughts in, as far as I can remember, the following order: 'This can't be the carpenter — What is it? — Some accident — Submarine volcano? — Coals, gas! — By Jove! we are being blown up — Everybody's dead — I am falling into the afterhatch — I see fire in it.'



"The coal-dust suspended in the air of the hold had glowed dull-red at the moment of the explosion. In the twinkling of an eye, in an infinitesimal fraction of a second since the first tilt of the bench, I was sprawling full length on the cargo. I picked myself up and scrambled out. It was quick like a rebound. The deck was a wilderness of smashed timber, lying crosswise like trees in a wood after a hurricane; an immense curtain of soiled rags waved gently before me — it was the mainsail blown to strips. I thought, The masts will be toppling over directly; and to get out of the way bolted on all-fours towards the poop-ladder. The first person I saw was Mahon, with eyes like saucers, his mouth open, and the long white hair standing straight on end round his head like a silver halo. He was just about to go down when the sight of the main-deck stirring, heaving up, and changing into splinters before his eyes, petrified him on the top step. I stared at him in unbelief, and he stared at me with a queer kind of shocked curiosity. I did not know that I had no hair, no eyebrows, no eyelashes, that my young mustache was burnt off, that my face was black, one cheek laid open, my nose cut, and my chin bleeding. I had lost my cap, one of my slippers, and my shirt was torn to rags. Of all this I was not aware. I was amazed to see the ship still afloat, the poop-deck whole — and, most of all, to see anybody alive. Also the peace of the sky and the serenity of the sea were distinctly surprising. I suppose I expected to see them convulsed with horror. . . . Pass the bottle.

"There was a voice hailing the ship from somewhere — in the air, in the sky — I couldn't tell. Presently I saw the captain — and he was mad. He asked me eagerly, 'Where's the cabin-table?' and to hear such a question was a frightful shock. I had just been blown up, you understand, and vibrated with that experience, — I wasn't quite sure whether I was alive. Mahon began to stamp with both feet and yelled at him, 'Good God! don't you see the deck's blown out of her?' I found my voice, and stammered out as if conscious of some gross neglect of duty, 'I don't know where the cabin-table is.' It was like an absurd dream.

"Do you know what he wanted next? Well, he wanted to trim the yards. Very placidly, and as if lost in thought, he insisted on having the foreyard squared. 'I don't know if there's anybody alive,' said Mahon, almost tearfully. 'Surely,' he said, gently, 'there will be enough left to square the foreyard.'

"The old chap, it seems, was in his own berth, winding up the chronometers, when the shock sent him spinning. Immediately it occurred to him — as he said afterwards — that the ship had struck something, and he ran out into the cabin. There, he saw, the cabin-table had vanished somewhere. The deck being blown up, it had fallen down into the lazarette of course. Where we had our breakfast that morning he saw only a great hole in the floor. This appeared to him so awfully mysterious, and impressed him so immensely, that what he saw and heard after he got on deck were mere trifles in comparison. And, mark, he noticed directly the wheel deserted and his bark off her course — and his only thought was to get that miserable, stripped, undecked, smoldering shell of a ship back

again with her head pointing at her port of destination. Bankok! That's what he was after. I tell you this quiet, bowed, bandy-legged, almost deformed little man was immense in the singleness of his idea and in his placid ignorance of our agitation. He motioned us forward with a commanding gesture, and went to take the wheel himself.

"Yes; that was the first thing we did — trim the yards of that wreck! No one was killed, or even disabled, but everyone was more or less hurt. You should have seen them! Some were in rags, with black faces, like coal-heavers, like sweeps, and had bullet heads that seemed closely cropped, but were in fact singed to the skin. Others, of the watch below, awakened by being shot out from their collapsing bunks, shivered incessantly, and kept on groaning even as we went about our work. But they all worked. That crew of Liverpool hard cases had in them the right stuff. It's my experience they always have. It is the sea that gives it — the vastness, the loneliness surrounding their dark stolid souls. Ah! Well! we stumbled, we crept, we fell, we barked our shins on the wreckage, we hauled. The masts stood, but we did not know how much they might be charred down below. It was nearly calm, but a long swell ran from the west and made her roll. They might go at any moment. We looked at them with apprehension. One could not foresee which way they would fall.

"Then we retreated aft and looked about us. The deck was a tangle of planks on edge, of planks on end, of splinters, of ruined woodwork. The masts rose from that chaos like big trees above a matted undergrowth. The interstices of that mass of wreckage were full of something whitish, sluggish, stirring — of something that was like a greasy fog. The smoke of the invisible fire was coming up again, was trailing, like a poisonous thick mist in some valley choked with dead wood. Already lazy wisps were beginning to curl upwards amongst the mass of splinters. Here and there a piece of timber, stuck upright, resembled a post. Half of a fife-rail had been shot through the foresail, and the sky made a patch of glorious blue in the ignobly soiled canvas. A portion of several boards holding together had fallen across the rail, and one end protruded overboard, like a gangway leading upon nothing, like a gangway leading over the deep sea, leading to death — as if inviting us to walk the plank at once and be done with our ridiculous troubles. And still the air, the sky — a ghost, something invisible was hailing the ship.

"Someone had the sense to look over, and there was the helmsman, who had impulsively jumped overboard, anxious to come back. He yelled and swam lustily like a merman, keeping up with the ship. We threw him a rope, and presently he stood amongst us streaming with water and very crest-fallen. The captain had surrendered the wheel, and apart, elbow on rail and chin in hand, gazed at the sea wistfully. We asked ourselves, What next? I thought, Now, this is something like. This is great. I wonder what will happen. O youth!

"Suddenly Mahon sighted a steamer far astern. Captain Beard said, 'We

may do something with her yet.' We hoisted two flags, which said in the international language of the sea, 'On fire. Want immediate assistance.' The steamer grew bigger rapidly, and by-and-by spoke with two flags on her foremast, 'I am coming to your assistance.'

"In half an hour she was abreast, to windward, within hail, and rolling slightly, with her engines stopped. We lost our composure, and yelled all together with excitement, 'We've been blown up.' A man in a white helmet, on the bridge, cried, 'Yes! All right! all right!' and he nodded his head, and smiled, and made soothing motions with his hand as though at a lot of frightened children. One of the boats dropped in the water, and walked towards us upon the sea with her long oars. Four Calashes pulled a swinging stroke. This was my first sight of Malay seamen. I've known them since, but what struck me then was their unconcern: they came alongside, and even the bowman standing up and holding to our main-chains with the boat-hook did not deign to lift his head for a glance. I thought people who had been blown up deserved more attention.

"A little man, dry like a chip and agile like a monkey, clambered up. It was the mate of the steamer. He gave one look, and cried, 'O boys — you had better quit.'

"We were silent. He talked apart with the captain for a time, — seemed to argue with him. Then they went away together to the steamer.

"When our skipper came back we learned that the steamer was the *Sommerville*, Captain Nash, from West Australia to Singapore *via* Batavia with mails, and that the agreement was she should tow us to Anjer or Batavia, if possible, where we could extinguish the fire by scuttling, and then proceed on our voyage — to Bankok! The old man seemed excited. 'We will do it yet,' he said to Mahon, fiercely. He shook his fist at the sky. Nobody else said a word.

"At noon the steamer began to tow. She went ahead slim and high, and what was left of the *Judea* followed at the end of seventy fathom of tow-rope, — followed her swiftly like a cloud of smoke with mastheads protruding above. We went aloft to furl the sails. We coughed on the yards, and were careful about the bunts. Do you see the lot of us there, putting a neat furl on the sails of that ship doomed to arrive nowhere? There was not a man who didn't think that at any moment the masts would topple over. From aloft we could not see the ship for smoke, and they worked carefully, passing the gaskets with even turns. 'Harbor furl — aloft there!' cried Mahon from below.

"You understand this? I don't think one of those chaps expected to get down in the usual way. When we did I heard them saying to each other, 'Well, I thought we would come down overboard, in a lump — sticks and all — blame me if I didn't.' 'That's what I was thinking to myself,' would answer wearily another battered and bandaged scarecrow. And, mind, these were men without the drilled-in habit of obedience. To an onlooker they would be a lot of profane scallywags without a redeeming point. What made them do it — what made

them obey me when I, thinking consciously how fine it was, made them drop the bunt of the foresail twice to try and do it better? What? They had no professional reputation — no examples, no praise. It wasn't a sense of duty; they all knew well enough how to shirk, and laze, and dodge — when they had a mind to it — and mostly they had. Was it the two pounds ten a month that sent them there? They didn't think their pay half good enough. No; it was something in them, something inborn and subtle and everlasting. I don't say positively that the crew of a French or German merchantman wouldn't have done it, but I doubt whether it would have been done in the same way. There was a completeness in it, something solid like a principle, and masterful like an instinct — a disclosure of something secret — of that hidden something, that gift, of good or evil that makes racial difference, that shapes the fate of nations.

"It was that night at ten that, for the first time since we had been fighting it, we saw the fire. The speed of the towing had fanned the smoldering destruction. A blue gleam appeared forward, shining below the wreck of the deck. It wavered in patches, it seemed to stir and creep like the light of a glowworm. I saw it first, and told Mahon. 'Then the game's up,' he said. 'We had better stop this towing, or she will burst out suddenly fore and aft before we can clear out.' We set up a yell; rang bells to attract their attention; they towed on. At last Mahon and I had to crawl forward and cut the rope with an ax. There was no time to cast off the lashings. Red tongues could be seen licking the wilderness of splinters under our feet as we made our way back to the poop.

"Of course they very soon found out in the steamer that the rope was gone. She gave a loud blast of her whistle, her lights were seen sweeping in a wide circle, she came up ranging close alongside, and stopped. We were all in a tight group on the poop looking at her. Every man had saved a little bundle or a bag. Suddenly a conical flame with a twisted top shot up forward and threw upon the black sea a circle of light, with the two vessels side by side and heaving gently in its center. Captain Beard had been sitting on the gratings still and mute for hours, but now he rose slowly and advanced in front of us, to the mizzen-shrouds. Captain Nash hailed: 'Come along! Look sharp. I have mail-bags on board. I will take you and your boats to Singapore.'

"'Thank you! No!' said our skipper. 'We must see the last of the ship.'

"'I can't stand by any longer,' shouted the other. 'Mails — you know.'

"'Ay! ay! We are all right.'

"'Very well! I'll report you in Singapore. . . . Good-by!'

"He waved his hand. Our men dropped their bundles quietly. The steamer moved ahead, and passing out of the circle of light, vanished at once from our sight, dazzled by the fire which burned fiercely. And then I knew that I would see the East first as commander of a small boat. I thought it fine; and the fidelity to the old ship was fine. We should see the last of her. Oh the glamour of youth! Oh the fire of it, more dazzling than the flames of the burning ship, throwing a

magic light on the wide earth, leaping audaciously to the sky, presently to be quenched by time, more cruel, more pitiless, more bitter than the sea — and like the flames of the burning ship surrounded by an impenetrable night.

. . . . .

“The old man warned us in his gentle and inflexible way that it was part of our duty to save for the underwriters as much as we could of the ship’s gear. Accordingly we went to work aft, while she blazed forward to give us plenty of light. We lugged out a lot of rubbish. What didn’t we save? An old barometer fixed with an absurd quantity of screws nearly cost me my life: a sudden rush of smoke came upon me, and I just got away in time. There were various stores, bolts of canvas, coils of rope; the poop looked like a marine bazaar, and the boats were lumbered to the gunwales. One would have thought the old man wanted to take as much as he could of his first command with him. He was very, very quiet, but off his balance evidently. Would you believe it? He wanted to take a length of old stream-cable and a kedge-anchor with him in the long-boat. We said, ‘Ay, ay, sir,’ deferentially, and on the quiet let the thing slip overboard. The heavy medicine-chest went that way, two bags of green coffee, tins of paint — fancy, paint! — a whole lot of things. Then I was ordered with two hands into the boats to make a stowage and get them ready against the time it would be proper for us to leave the ship.

“We put everything straight, stepped the long-boat’s mast for our skipper, who was to take charge of her, and I was not sorry to sit down for a moment. My face felt raw, every limb ached as if broken, I was aware of all my ribs, and would have sworn to a twist in the backbone. The boats, fast astern, lay in a deep shadow, and all around I could see the circle of the sea lighted by the fire. A gigantic flame arose forward straight and clear. It flared fierce, with noises like the whirl of wings, with rumbles as of thunder. There were cracks, detonations, and from the cone of flame the sparks flew upwards, as man is born to trouble, to leaky ships, and to ships that burn.

“What bothered me was that the ship, lying broadside to the swell and to such wind as there was — a mere breath — the boats would not keep astern where they were safe, but persisted, in a pig-headed way boats have, in getting under the counter and then swinging alongside. They were knocking about dangerously and coming near the flame, while the ship rolled on them, and, of course, there was always the danger of the masts going over the side at any moment. I and my two boat-keepers kept them off as best we could with oars and boat-hooks; but to be constantly at it became exasperating, since there was no reason why we should not leave at once. We could not see those on board, nor could we imagine what caused the delay. The boat-keepers were swearing feebly, and I had not only my share of the work, but also had to keep at it two men who showed a constant inclination to lay themselves down and let things slide.

"At last I hailed 'On deck there,' and someone looked over. 'We're ready here,' I said. The head disappeared, and very soon popped up again. 'The captain says, All right, sir, and to keep the boats well clear of the ship.'

"Half an hour passed. Suddenly there was a frightful racket, rattle, clanking of chain, hiss of water, and millions of sparks flew up into the shivering column of smoke that stood leaning slightly above the ship. The catheads had burned away, and the two red-hot anchors had gone to the bottom, tearing out after them two hundred fathom of red-hot chain. The ship trembled, the mass of flame swayed as if ready to collapse, and the fore top-gallant-mast fell. It darted down like an arrow of fire, shot under, and instantly leaping up within an oar's-length of the boats, floated quietly, very black on the luminous sea. I hailed the deck again. After some time a man in an unexpectedly cheerful but also muffled tone, as though he had been trying to speak with his mouth shut, informed me, 'Coming directly, sir,' and vanished. For a long time I heard nothing but the whirl and roar of the fire. There were also whistling sounds. The boats jumped, tugged at the painters, ran at each other playfully, knocked their sides together, or, do what we would, swung in a bunch against the ship's side. I couldn't stand it any longer, and swarming up a rope, clambered aboard over the stern.

"It was as bright as day. Coming up like this, the sheet of fire facing me was a terrifying sight, and the heat seemed hardly bearable at first. On a settee cushion dragged out of the cabin, Captain Beard, with his legs drawn up and one arm under his head, slept with the light playing on him. Do you know what the rest were busy about? They were sitting on deck right aft, round an open case, eating bread and cheese and drinking bottled stout.

"On the background of flames twisting in fierce tongues above their heads they seemed at home like salamanders, and looked like a band of desperate pirates. The fire sparkled in the whites of their eyes, gleamed on patches of white skin seen through the torn shirts. Each had the marks as of a battle about him — bandaged heads, tied-up arms, a strip of dirty rag round a knee — and each man had a bottle between his legs and a chunk of cheese in his hand. Mahon got up. With his handsome and disreputable head, his hooked profile, his long white beard, and with an uncorked bottle in his hand, he resembled one of those reckless sea-robbers of old making merry amidst violence and disaster. 'The last meal on board,' he explained solemnly. 'We had nothing to eat all day, and it was no use leaving all this.' He flourished the bottle and indicated the sleeping skipper. 'He said he couldn't swallow anything, so I got him to lie down,' he went on; and as I stared, 'I don't know whether you are aware, young fellow, the man had no sleep to speak of for days — and there will be dam' little sleep in the boats.' 'There will be no boats by-and-by if you fool about much longer,' I said, indignantly. I walked up to the skipper and shook him by the shoulder. At last he opened his eyes, but did not move. 'Time to leave her, sir,' I said, quietly.

"He got up painfully, looked at the flames, at the sea sparkling round the ship, and black, black as ink farther away; he looked at the stars shining dim through a thin veil of smoke in a sky black, black as Erebus.

" 'Youngest first,' he said.

"And the ordinary seaman, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, got up, clambered over the taffrail, and vanished. Others followed. One, on the point of going over, stopped short to drain his bottle, and with a great swing of his arm flung it at the fire. 'Take this!' he cried.

"The skipper lingered disconsolately, and we left him to commune alone for awhile with his first command. Then I went up again and brought him away at last. It was time. The ironwork on the poop was hot to the touch.

"Then the painter of the long-boat was cut, and the three boats, tied together, drifted clear of the ship. It was just sixteen hours after the explosion when we abandoned her. Mahon had charge of the second boat, and I had the smallest — the 14-foot thing. The long-boat would have taken the lot of us; but the skipper said we must save as much property as we could — for the underwriters — and so I got my first command. I had two men with me, a bag of biscuits, a few tins of meat, and a breaker of water. I was ordered to keep close to the long-boat, that in case of bad weather we might be taken into her.

"And do you know what I thought? I thought I would part company as soon as I could. I wanted to have my first command all to myself. I wasn't going to sail in a squadron if there were a chance for independent cruising. I would make land by myself. I would beat the other boats. Youth! All youth! The silly, charming, beautiful youth.

"But we did not make a start at once. We must see the last of the ship. And so the boats drifted about that night, heaving and setting on the swell. The men dozed, waked, sighed, groaned. I looked at the burning ship.

"Between the darkness of earth and heaven she was burning fiercely upon a disc of purple sea shot by the blood-red play of gleams; upon a disc of water glittering and sinister. A high, clear flame, an immense and lonely flame, ascended from the ocean, and from its summit the black smoke poured continuously at the sky. She burned furiously, mournful and imposing like a funeral pile kindled in the night, surrounded by the sea, watched over by the stars. A magnificent death had come like a grace, like a gift, like a reward to that old ship at the end of her laborious days. The surrender of her weary ghost to the keeping of stars and sea was stirring like the sight of a glorious triumph. The masts fell just before daybreak, and for a moment there was a burst and turmoil of sparks that seemed to fill with flying fire the night patient and watchful, the vast night lying silent upon the sea. At daylight she was only a charred shell, floating still under a cloud of smoke and bearing a glowing mass of coal within.

"Then the oars were got out, and the boats forming in a line moved round

her remains as if in procession — the long-boat leading. As we pulled across her stern a slim dart of fire shot out viciously at us, and suddenly she went down, head first, in a great hiss of steam. The unconsumed stern was the last to sink; but the paint had gone, had cracked, had peeled off, and there were no letters, there was no word, no stubborn device that was like her soul, to flash at the rising sun her creed and her name.

"We made our way north. A breeze sprang up, and about noon all the boats came together for the last time. I had no mast or sail in mine, but I made a mast out of a spare oar and hoisted a boat-awning for a sail, with a boat-hook for a yard. She was certainly over-masted, but I had the satisfaction of knowing that with the wind aft I could beat the other two. I had to wait for them. Then we all had a look at the captain's chart, and, after a sociable meal of hard bread and water, got our last instructions. These were simple: steer north, and keep together as much as possible. 'Be careful with that jury rig, Marlow,' said the captain; and Mahon, as I sailed proudly past his boat, wrinkled his curved nose and hailed, 'You will sail that ship of yours under water, if you don't look out, young fellow.' He was a malicious old man — and may the deep sea where he sleeps now rock him gently, rock him tenderly to the end of time!

"Before sunset a thick rain-squall passed over the two boats, which were far astern, and that was the last I saw of them for a time. Next day I sat steering my cockle-shell — my first command — with nothing but water and sky around me. I did sight in the afternoon the upper sails of a ship far away, but said nothing, and my men did not notice her. You see I was afraid she might be homeward bound, and I had no mind to turn back from the portals of the East. I was steering for Java — another blessed name — like Bankok, you know. I steered many days.

"I need not tell you what it is to be knocking about in an open boat. I remember nights and days of calm when we pulled, we pulled, and the boat seemed to stand still, as if bewitched within the circle of the sea horizon. I remember the heat, the deluge of rain-squalls that kept us baling for dear life (but filled our water-cask), and I remember sixteen hours on end with a mouth dry as a cinder and a steering-oar over the stern to keep my first command head on to a breaking sea. I did not know how good a man I was till then. I remember the drawn faces, the dejected figures of my two men, and I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more — the feeling that I could last for ever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort — to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires — and expires, too soon, too soon — before life itself.

"And this is how I see the East. I have seen its secret places and have looked into its very soul; but now I see it always from a small boat, a high outline of



mountains, blue and afar in the morning; like faint mist at noon; a jagged wall of purple at sunset. I have the feel of the oar in my hand, the vision of a scorching blue sea in my eyes. And I see a bay, a wide bay, smooth as glass and polished like ice, shimmering in the dark. A red light burns far off upon the gloom of the land, and the night is soft and warm. We drag at the oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odors of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night — the first sigh of the East on my face. That I can never forget. It was impalpable and enslaving, like a charm, like a whispered promise of mysterious delight.

"We had been pulling this finishing spell for eleven hours. Two pulled, and he whose turn it was to rest sat at the tiller. We had made out the red light in that bay and steered for it, guessing it must mark some small coasting port. We passed two vessels, outlandish and high-sterned, sleeping at anchor, and, approaching the light, now very dim, ran the boat's nose against the end of a jutting wharf. We were blind with fatigue. My men dropped the oars and fell off the thwarts as if dead. I made fast to a pile. A current rippled softly. The scented obscurity of the shore was grouped into vast masses, a density of colossal clumps of vegetation, probably — mute and fantastic shapes. And at their foot the semicircle of a beach gleamed faintly, like an illusion. There was not a light, not a stir, not a sound. The mysterious East faced me, perfumed like a flower, silent like death, dark like a grave.

"And I sat weary beyond expression, exulting like a conqueror, sleepless and entranced as if before a profound, a fateful enigma.

"A splashing of oars, a measured dip reverberating on the level of water, intensified by the silence of the shore into loud claps, made me jump up. A boat, a European boat, was coming in. I invoked the name of the dead; I hailed: *Judea ahoy!* A thin shout answered.

"It was the captain. I had beaten the flagship by three hours, and I was glad to hear the old man's voice again, tremulous and tired. 'Is it you, Marlow?' 'Mind the end of that jetty, sir,' I cried.

"He approached cautiously, and brought up with the deep-sea lead-line which we had saved — for the underwriters. I eased my painter and fell alongside. He sat, a broken figure at the stern, wet with dew, his hands clasped in his lap. His men were asleep already. 'I had a terrible time of it,' he murmured. 'Mahon is behind — not very far.' We conversed in whispers, in low whispers, as if afraid to wake up the land. Guns, thunder, earthquakes would not have awakened the men just then.

"Looking around as we talked, I saw away at sea a bright light traveling in the night. 'There's a steamer passing the bay,' I said. She was not passing, she was entering, and she even came close and anchored. 'I wish,' said the old man, 'you would find out whether she is English. Perhaps they could give us a passage somewhere.' He seemed nervously anxious. So by dint of punching and kicking

I started one of my men into a state of somnambulism, and giving him an oar, took another and pulled towards the lights of the steamer.

"There was a murmur of voices in her, metallic hollow clangs of the engine-room, footsteps on the deck. Her ports shone, round like dilated eyes. Shapes moved about, and there was a shadowy man high up on the bridge. He heard my oars.

"And then, before I could open my lips, the East spoke to me, but it was in a Western voice. A torrent of words was poured into the enigmatical, the fateful silence; outlandish, angry words, mixed with words and even whole sentences of good English, less strange but even more surprising. The voice swore and cursed violently; it riddled the solemn peace of the bay by a volley of abuse. It began by calling me Pig, and from that went crescendo into unmentionable adjectives — in English. The man up there raged aloud in two languages, and with a sincerity in his fury that almost convinced me I had, in some way, sinned against the harmony of the universe. I could hardly see him, but began to think he would work himself into a fit.

"Suddenly he ceased, and I could hear him snorting and blowing like a porpoise. I said —

" 'What steamer is this, pray?'

" 'Eh? What's this? And who are you?'

" 'Castaway crew of an English bark burnt at sea. We came here to-night. I am the second mate. The captain is in the long-boat, and wishes to know if you would give us a passage somewhere.'

" 'Oh, my goodness! I say. . . . This is the *Celestial* from Singapore on her return trip. I'll arrange with your captain in the morning, . . . and, . . . I say, . . . did you hear me just now?'

" 'I should think the whole bay heard you.'

" 'I thought you were a shore-boat. Now, look here — this infernal lazy scoundrel of a caretaker has gone to sleep again — curse him. The light is out, and I nearly ran foul of the end of this damned jetty. This is the third time he plays me this trick. Now, I ask you, can anybody stand this kind of thing? It's enough to drive a man out of his mind. I'll report him. . . . I'll get the Assistant Resident to give him the sack, by . . . See — there's no light. It's out, isn't it? I take you to witness the light's out. There should be a light, you know. A red light on the ——'

" 'There was a light,' I said, mildly.

" 'But it's out, man! What's the use of talking like this? You can see for yourself it's out — don't you? If you had to take a valuable steamer along this God-forsaken coast you would want a light too. I'll kick him from end to end of his miserable wharf. You'll see if I don't. I will ——'

" 'So I may tell my captain you'll take us?' I broke in.

" 'Yes, I'll take you. Good night,' he said, brusquely.

"I pulled back, made fast again to the jetty, and then went to sleep at last. I had faced the silence of the East. I had heard some of its languages. But when I opened my eyes again the silence was as complete as though it had never been broken. I was lying in a flood of light, and the sky had never looked so far, so high, before. I opened my eyes and lay without moving.

"And then I saw the men of the East — they were looking at me. The whole length of the jetty was full of people. I saw brown, bronze, yellow faces, the black eyes, the glitter, the color of an Eastern crowd. And all these beings stared without a murmur, without a sigh, without a movement. They stared down at the boats, at the sleeping men who at night had come to them from the sea. Nothing moved. The fronds of palms stood still against the sky. Not a branch stirred along the shore, and the brown roofs of hidden houses peeped through the green foliage, through the big leaves that hung shining and still like leaves forged of heavy metal. This was the East of the ancient navigators, so old, so mysterious, resplendent and somber, living and unchanged, full of danger and promise. And these were the men. I sat up suddenly. A wave of movement passed through the crowd from end to end, passed along the heads, swayed the bodies, ran along the jetty like a ripple on the water, like a breath of wind on a field — and all was still again. I see it now — the wide sweep of the bay, the glittering sands, the wealth of green infinite and varied, the sea blue like the sea of a dream, the crowd of attentive faces, the blaze of vivid color — the water reflecting it all, the curve of the shore, the jetty, the high-sterned outlandish craft floating still, and the three boats with tired men from the West sleeping unconscious of the land and the people and of the violence of sunshine. They slept thrown across the thwarts, curled on bottom-boards, in the careless attitudes of death. The head of the old skipper, leaning back in the stern of the long-boat, had fallen on his breast, and he looked as though he would never wake. Farther out old Mahon's face was upturned to the sky, with the long white beard spread out on his breast, as though he had been shot where he sat at the tiller; and a man, all in a heap in the bow of the boat, slept with both arms embracing the stem-head and with his cheek laid on the gunwale. The East looked at them without a sound.

"I have known its fascinations since: I have seen the mysterious shores, the still water, the lands of brown nations, where a stealthy Nemesis lies in wait, pursues, overtakes so many of the conquering race, who are proud of their wisdom, of their knowledge, of their strength. But for me all the East is contained in that vision of my youth. It is all in that moment when I opened my young eyes on it. I came upon it from a tussle with the sea — and I was young — and I saw it looking at me. And this is all that is left of it! Only a moment; a moment of strength, of romance, of glamour — of youth! . . . A flick of sunshine upon a strange shore, the time to remember, the time for a sigh, and — good-by! — Night — Good-by . . .!"

He drank.

“Ah! The good old time — the good old time. Youth and the sea. Glamour and the sea! The good, strong sea, the salt, bitter sea, that could whisper to you and roar at you and knock your breath out of you.”

He drank again.

“By all that’s wonderful, it is the sea, I believe, the sea itself — or is it youth alone? Who can tell? But you here — you all had something out of life: money, love — whatever one gets on shore — and, tell me, wasn’t that the best time, that time when we were young at sea; young and had nothing, on the sea that gives nothing, except hard knocks — and sometimes a chance to feel your strength — that only — what you all regret?”

And we all nodded at him: the man of finance, the man of accounts, the man of law, we all nodded at him over the polished table that like a still sheet of brown water reflected our faces, lined, wrinkled; our faces marked by toil, by deceptions, by success, by love; our weary eyes looking still, looking always, looking anxiously for something out of life, that while it is expected is already gone — has passed unseen, in a sigh, in a flash — together with the youth, with the strength, with the romance of illusions.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance, literal and symbolic, of the title?
2. How old was Marlow when he first went to sea?
3. What was the motto of the *Judea*? What was her destination? Locate it on a map.
4. List some of her difficulties in getting under way.
5. When did the rats leave the ship? What caused the fire in the hold?
6. Where was the ship when it blew up? What happened to the captain?
7. How did Marlow get his first command, and what was it?
8. List some of the most memorable scenes, and analyze for methods of description.

*Before writing her famous novels, many of them based on childhood memories of frontier Nebraska, Willa Cather was a dramatic critic on a Pittsburgh newspaper and later head of the English department in a Pittsburgh high school. She left Pittsburgh to serve as managing editor of a New York magazine from 1906 to 1912. Then O Pioneers (1913) made her a widely known and successful novelist, and was followed by My Ántonia (1918), Death Comes for the Archbishop (1927), Shadows on the Rock (1931), and other outstanding works. Willa Cather said she achieved her goal when she stopped trying to write and began to remember.*

It was Paul's afternoon to appear before the faculty of the Pittsburgh High School to account for his various misdemeanors. He had been suspended a week ago, and his father had called at the Principal's office and confessed his perplexity about his son. Paul entered the faculty room suave and smiling. His clothes were a trifle outgrown, and the tan velvet on the collar of his open overcoat was frayed and worn; but for all that there was something of the dandy about him, and he wore an opal pin in his neatly knotted black four-in-hand, and a red carnation in his buttonhole. This latter adornment the faculty somehow felt was not properly significant of the contrite spirit befitting a boy under the ban of suspension.

Paul was tall for his age and very thin, with high, cramped shoulders and a narrow chest. His eyes were remarkable for a certain hysterical brilliancy, and he continually used them in a conscious, theatrical sort of way, peculiarly offensive in a boy. The pupils were abnormally large, as though he were addicted to belladonna, but there was a glassy glitter about them which that drug does not produce.

When questioned by the Principal as to why he was there, Paul stated, politely enough, that he wanted to come back to school. This was a lie, but Paul was quite accustomed to lying; found it, indeed, indispensable for overcoming friction. His teachers were asked to state their respective charges against him, which they did with such a rancour and aggrievedness as evinced that this was not a usual case. Disorder and impertinence were among the offenses named, yet each of his instructors felt that it was scarcely possible to put into words the real cause of the trouble, which lay in a sort of hysterically defiant manner of the boy's; in the contempt which they all knew he felt for them, and which he seemingly made not the least effort to conceal. Once, when he had been making a synopsis of a paragraph at the blackboard, his English teacher had stepped to

his side and attempted to guide his hand. Paul had started back with a shudder and thrust his hands violently behind him. The astonished woman could scarcely have been more hurt and embarrassed had he struck at her. The insult was so involuntary and definitely personal as to be unforgettable. In one way and another, he had made all his teachers, men and women alike, conscious of the same feeling of physical aversion. In one class he habitually sat with his hand shading his eyes; in another he always looked out of the window during the recitation; in another he made a running commentary on the lecture, with humorous intent.

His teachers felt this afternoon that his whole attitude was symbolized by his shrug and his flippantly red carnation flower, and they fell upon him without mercy, his English teacher leading the pack. He stood through it smiling, his pale lips parted over his white teeth. (His lips were continually twitching, and he had a habit of raising his eyebrows that was contemptuous and irritating to the last degree.) Older boys than Paul had broken down and shed tears under that ordeal, but his set smile did not once desert him, and his only sign of discomfort was the nervous trembling of the fingers that toyed with the buttons of his overcoat, and an occasional jerking of the other hand which held his hat. Paul was always smiling, always glancing about him, seeming to feel that people might be watching him and trying to detect something. This conscious expression, since it was as far as possible from boyish mirthfulness, was usually attributed to insolence or "smartness."

As the inquisition proceeded, one of his instructors repeated an impertinent remark of the boy's, and the Principal asked him whether he thought that a courteous speech to make to a woman. Paul shrugged his shoulders slightly and his eyebrows twitched.

"I don't know," he replied. "I didn't mean to be polite or impolite, either. I guess it's a sort of way I have of saying things regardless."

The Principal asked him whether he didn't think that a way it would be well to get rid of. Paul grinned and said he guessed so. When he was told that he could go, he bowed gracefully and went out. His bow was like a repetition of the scandalous red carnation.

His teachers were in despair, and his drawing master voiced the feeling of them all when he declared there was something about the boy which none of them understood. He added: "I don't believe that smile of his comes altogether from insolence; there's something sort of haunted about it. The boy is not strong, for one thing. There is something wrong about the fellow."

The drawing master had come to realize that, in looking at Paul, one saw only his white teeth and the forced animation of his eyes. One warm afternoon the boy had gone to sleep at his drawing-board, and his master had noted with amazement what a white, blue-veined face it was; drawn and wrinkled like an old man's about the eyes, the lips twitching even in his sleep.

His teachers left the building dissatisfied and unhappy; humiliated to have

felt so vindictive toward a mere boy, to have uttered this feeling in cutting terms, and to have set each other on, as it were, in the gruesome game of intemperate reproach. One of them remembered having seen a miserable street cat set at bay by a ring of tormentors.

As for Paul, he ran down the hill whistling the Soldiers' Chorus from *Faust*, looking wildly behind him now and then to see whether some of his teachers were not there to witness his light-heartedness. As it was now late in the afternoon and Paul was on duty that evening as usher at Carnegie Hall, he decided that he would not go home to supper.

When he reached the concert hall the doors were not yet open. It was chilly outside, and he decided to go up into the picture gallery — always deserted at this hour — where there were some of Raffelli's gay studies of Paris streets and an airy blue Venetian scene or two that always exhilarated him. He was delighted to find no one in the gallery but the old guard, who sat in the corner, a newspaper on his knee, a black patch over one eye and the other closed. Paul possessed himself of the place and walked confidently up and down, whistling under his breath. After a while he sat down before a blue Rico and lost himself. When he bethought him to look at his watch, it was after seven o'clock, and he rose with a start and ran downstairs, making a face at Augustus Cæsar, peering out from the cast-room, and an evil gesture at the Venus of Milo as he passed her on the stairway.

When Paul reached the ushers' dressing-room half-a-dozen boys were there already, and he began excitedly to tumble into his uniform. It was one of the few that at all approached fitting, and Paul thought it very becoming — though he knew the tight, straight coat accentuated his narrow chest, about which he was exceedingly sensitive. He was always excited while he dressed, twanging all over to the tuning of the strings and the preliminary flourishes of the horns in the music-room; but tonight he seemed quite beside himself, and he teased and plagued the boys until, telling him that he was crazy, they put him down on the floor and sat on him.

Somewhat calmed by his suppression, Paul dashed out to the front of the house to seat the early comers. He was a model usher. Gracious and smiling he ran up and down the aisles. Nothing was too much trouble for him; he carried messages and brought programs as though it were his greatest pleasure in life, and all the people in his section thought him a charming boy, feeling that he remembered and admired them. As the house filled, he grew more and more vivacious and animated, and the colour came to his cheeks and lips. It was very much as though this were a great reception and Paul were the host. Just as the musicians came out to take their places, his English teacher arrived with checks for the seats which a prominent manufacturer had taken for the season. She betrayed some embarrassment when she handed Paul the tickets, and a *hauteur* which subsequently made her feel very foolish. Paul was startled

for a moment, and had the feeling of wanting to put her out; what business had she here among all these fine people and gay colours? He looked her over and decided that she was not appropriately dressed and must be a fool to sit downstairs in such togs. The tickets had probably been sent her out of kindness, he reflected, as he put down a seat for her, and she had about as much right to sit there as he had.

When the symphony began Paul sank into one of the rear seats with a long sigh of relief, and lost himself as he had done before the Rico. It was not that symphonies, as such, meant anything in particular to Paul, but the first sigh of the instruments seemed to free some hilarious spirit within him; something that struggled there like the Genius in the bottle found by the Arab fisherman. He felt a sudden zest of life; the lights danced before his eyes and the concert hall blazed into unimaginable splendor. When the soprano soloist came on, Paul forgot even the nastiness of his teacher's being there, and gave himself up to the peculiar intoxication such personages always had for him. The soloist chanced to be a German woman, by no means in her first youth, and the mother of many children; but she wore a satin gown and a tiara, and she had that indefinable air of achievement, that world-shine upon her, which always blinded Paul to any possible defects.

After a concert was over, Paul was often irritable and wretched until he got to sleep, — and tonight he was even more than usually restless. He had the feeling of not being able to let down; of its being impossible to give up this delicious excitement which was the only thing that could be called living at all. During the last number he withdrew and, after hastily changing his clothes in the dressing-room, slipped out to the side door where the singer's carriage stood. Here he began pacing rapidly up and down the walk, waiting to see her come out.

Over yonder the Schenley, in its vacant stretch, loomed big and square through the fine rain, the windows of its twelve stories glowing like those of a lighted cardboard house under a Christmas tree. All the actors and singers of any importance stayed there when they were in the city, and a number of the big manufacturers of the place lived there in the winter. Paul had often hung about the hotel, watching the people go in and out, longing to enter and leave school-masters and dull care behind him forever.

At last the singer came out, accompanied by the conductor, who helped her into her carriage and closed the door with a cordial "*Auf Wiedersehen*" — which set Paul to wondering whether she were not an old sweetheart of his. Paul followed the carriage over to the hotel, walking so rapidly as not to be far from the entrance when the singer alighted and disappeared behind the swinging glass doors which were opened by a Negro in a tall hat and a long coat. In the moment that the door was ajar, it seemed to Paul that he, too, entered. He seemed to feel himself go after her up the steps, into the warm, lighted building, into an exotic, a tropical world of shiny, glistening surfaces



and basking ease. He reflected upon the mysterious dishes that were brought into the dining-room, the green bottles in buckets of ice, as he had seen them in the supper party pictures of the Sunday supplement. A quick gust of wind brought the rain down with sudden vehemence, and Paul was startled to find that he was still outside in the slush of the gravel driveway; that his boots were letting in the water and his scanty overcoat was clinging wet about him; that the lights in front of the concert hall were out, and that the rain was driving in sheets between him and the orange glow of the windows above him. There it was, what he wanted — tangibly before him like the fairy world of a Christmas pantomime; as the rain beat in his face, Paul wondered whether he were destined always to shiver in the black night outside, looking up at it.

He turned and walked reluctantly toward the car tracks. The end had to come some time; his father in his night-clothes at the top of the stairs, explanations that did not explain, hastily improvised fictions that were forever tripping him up, his upstairs room and its horrible yellow wall-paper, the creaking bureau with the greasy plush collar-box, and over his painted wooden bed the pictures of George Washington and John Calvin, and the framed motto, "Feed my Lambs," which had been worked in red worsted by his mother, whom Paul could not remember.

Half an hour later Paul alighted from the Negley Avenue car and went slowly down one of the side streets off the main thoroughfare. It was a highly respectable street, where all the houses were exactly alike, and where business men of moderate means begot and reared large families of children, all of whom went to Sabbath-school and learned the shorter catechism, and were interested in arithmetic; all of whom were as exactly alike as their homes, and of a piece with the monotony in which they lived. Paul never went up Cordelia Street without a shudder of loathing. His home was next the house of the Cumberland minister. He approached it tonight with the nerveless sense of defeat, the hopeless feeling of sinking back forever into ugliness and commonness that he had always had when he came home. The moment he turned into Cordelia Street he felt the waters close above his head. After each of these orgies of living, he experienced all the physical depression which follows a debauch; the loathing of respectable beds, of common food, of a house permeated by kitchen odors; a shuddering repulsion for the flavorless, colorless mass of everyday existence; a morbid desire for cool things and soft lights and fresh flowers.

The nearer he approached the house, the more absolutely unequal Paul felt to the sight of it all; his ugly sleeping chamber; the cold bath-room with the grimy zinc tub, the cracked mirror, the dripping spigots; his father, at the top of the stairs, his hairy legs sticking out from his night-shirt, his feet thrust into carpet slippers. He was so much later than usual that there would certainly be inquiries and reproaches. Paul stopped short before the door. He felt that he could not be accosted by his father tonight; that he could not toss again on

that miserable bed. He would not go in. He would tell his father that he had no car-fare, and it was raining so hard he had gone home with one of the boys and stayed all night.

Meanwhile, he was wet and cold. He went around to the back of the house and tried one of the basement windows, found it open, raised it cautiously, and scrambled down the cellar wall to the floor. There he stood, holding his breath, terrified by the noise he had made; but the floor above him was silent, and there was no creak on the stairs. He found a soap-box, and carried it over to the soft ring of light that streamed from the furnace door, and sat down. He was horribly afraid of rats, so he did not try to sleep, but sat looking distrustfully at the dark, still terrified lest he might have awakened his father. In such reactions, after one of the experiences which made days and nights out of the dreary blanks of the calendar, when his senses were deadened, Paul's head was always singularly clear. Suppose his father had heard him getting in at the window and had come down and shot him for a burglar? Then, again, suppose his father had come down, pistol in hand, and he had cried out in time to save himself, and his father had been horrified to think how nearly he had killed him? Then, again, suppose a day should come when his father would remember that night, and wish there had been no warning cry to stay his hand? With this last supposition Paul entertained himself until daybreak.

The following Sunday was fine; the sodden November chill was broken by the last flash of autumnal summer. In the morning Paul had to go to church and Sabbath-school, as always. On seasonable Sunday afternoons the burghers of Cordelia Street usually sat out on their front "stoops," and talked to their neighbors on the next stoop, or called to those across the street in neighborly fashion. The men sat placidly on gay cushions placed upon the steps that led down to the sidewalk, while the women, in their Sunday "waists," sat in rockers on the cramped porches, pretending to be greatly at their ease. The children played in the streets; there were so many of them that the place resembled the recreation grounds of a kindergarten. The men on the steps — all in their shirt sleeves, their vests unbuttoned — sat with their legs well apart, their stomachs comfortably protruding, and talked of the prices of things, or told anecdotes of the sagacity of their various chiefs and overlords. They occasionally looked over the multitude of squabbling children, listened affectionately to their high-pitched, nasal voices, smiling to see their own proclivities reproduced in their offspring, and interspersed their legends of the iron kings with remarks about their sons' progress at school, their grades in arithmetic, and the amounts they had saved in their toy banks.

On this last Sunday of November, Paul sat all the afternoon on the lowest step of his "stoop," staring into the street, while his sisters, in their rockers, were talking to the minister's daughters next door about how many shirt-waists they had made in the last week, and how many waffles some one had eaten at

the last church supper. When the weather was warm, and his father was in a particularly jovial frame of mind, the girls made lemonade, which was always brought out in a red-glass pitcher, ornamented with forget-me-nots in blue enamel. This the girls thought very fine, and the neighbors joked about the suspicious color of the pitcher.

Today Paul's father, on the top step, was talking to a young man who shifted a restless baby from knee to knee. He happened to be the young man who was daily held up to Paul as a model, and after whom it was his father's dearest hope that he would pattern. This young man was of a ruddy complexion, with a compressed, red mouth, and faded, near-sighted eyes, over which he wore thick spectacles, with gold bows that curved about his ears. He was clerk to one of the magnates of a great steel corporation, and was looked upon in Cordelia Street as a young man with a future. There was a story that, some five years ago — he was now barely twenty-six — he had been a trifle "dissipated," but in order to curb his appetites and save the loss of time and strength that a sowing of wild oats might have entailed, he had taken his chief's advice, oft reiterated to his employes, and at twenty-one had married the first woman whom he could persuade to share his fortunes. She happened to be an angular school-mistress, much older than he, who also wore thick glasses, and who had now borne him four children, all near-sighted, like herself.

The young man was relating how his chief, now cruising in the Mediterranean, kept in touch with all the details of the business, arranging his office hours on his yacht just as though he were at home, and "knocking off work enough to keep two stenographers busy." His father told, in turn, the plan his corporation was considering, of putting in an electric railway plant at Cairo. Paul snapped his teeth; he had an awful apprehension that they might spoil it all before he got there. Yet he rather liked to hear these legends of the iron kings, that were told and retold on Sundays and holidays; these stories of palaces in Venice, yachts on the Mediterranean, and high play at Monte Carlo appealed to his fancy, and he was interested in the triumphs of cash boys who had become famous, though he had no mind for the cash boy stage.

After supper was over, and he had helped to dry the dishes, Paul nervously asked his father whether he could go to George's to get some help in his geometry, and still more nervously asked for car-fare. This latter request he had to repeat, as his father, on principle, did not like to hear requests for money, whether much or little. He asked Paul whether he could not go to some boy who lived nearer, and told him that he ought not to leave his school work until Sunday; but he gave him the dime. He was not a poor man, but he had a worthy ambition to come up in the world. His only reason for allowing Paul to usher was that he thought a boy ought to be earning a little.

Paul bounded upstairs, scrubbed the greasy odor of dish-water from his hands with the ill-smelling soap he hated, and then shook over his fingers a few

drops of violet water from the bottle he kept hidden in his drawer. He left the house with his geometry conspicuously under his arm, and the moment he got out of Cordelia Street and boarded a downtown car, he shook off the lethargy of two deadening days, and began to live again.

The leading juvenile of the permanent stock company which played at one of the downtown theaters was an acquaintance of Paul's, and the boy had been invited to drop in at the Sunday-night rehearsals whenever he could. For more than a year Paul had spent every available moment loitering about Charley Edwards' dressing-room. He had won a place among Edwards' following not only because the young actor, who could not afford to employ a dresser, often found him useful, but because he recognized in Paul something akin to what churchmen term "vocation."

It was at the theater and at Carnegie Hall that Paul really lived, the rest was but a sleep and a forgetting. This was Paul's fairy tale, and it had for him all the allurements of a secret love. The moment he inhaled the gassy, painty, dusty odor behind the scenes, he breathed like a prisoner set free, and felt within him the possibility of doing or saying splendid, brilliant things. The moment the cracked orchestra beat out the overture from *Martha*, or jerked at the serenade from *Rigoletto*, all stupid and ugly things slid from him, and his senses were deliciously, yet delicately fired.

Perhaps it was because, in Paul's world, the natural nearly always wore the guise of ugliness, that a certain element of artificiality seemed to him necessary in beauty. Perhaps it was because his experience of life elsewhere was so full of Sabbath-school picnics, petty economies, wholesome advice as to how to succeed in life, and the unescapable odors of cooking, that he found this existence so alluring, these smartly clad men and women so attractive, that he was so moved by these starry apple orchards that bloomed perennially under the lime-light.

It would be difficult to put it strongly enough how convincingly the stage entrance of that theater was for Paul the actual portal of Romance. Certainly none of the company ever suspected it, least of all Charley Edwards. It was very like the old stories that used to float about London of fabulously rich Jews, who had subterranean halls, with palms, and fountains, and soft lamps and richly appressed women who never saw the disenchanting light of London day. So, in the midst of that smoke-palled city, enamored of figures and grimy toil, Paul had his secret temple, his wishing-carpet, his bit of blue-and-white Mediterranean shore bathed in perpetual sunshine.

Several of Paul's teachers had a theory that his imagination had been perverted by garish fiction; but the truth was, he scarcely ever read at all. The books at home were not such as would either tempt or corrupt a youthful mind, and as for reading the novels that some of his friends urged upon him — well, he got what he wanted much more quickly from music; any sort of music, from an orchestra to a barrel organ. He needed only the spark, the indescribable thrill

that made his imagination master of his senses, and he could make plots and pictures enough of his own. It was equally true that he was not stage-struck — not, at any rate, in the usual acceptation of that expression. He had no desire to become an actor, any more than he had to become a musician. He felt no necessity to do any of these things; what he wanted was to see, to be in the atmosphere, float on the wave of it, to be carried out, blue league after blue league, away from everything.

After a night behind the scenes, Paul found his school-room more than ever repulsive; the hard floors and naked walls; the prosy men who never wore frock coats, or violets in their button-holes; the women with their dull gowns, shrill voices, and pitiful seriousness about prepositions that govern the dative. He could not bear to have the other pupils think, for a moment, that he took these people seriously; he must convey to them that he considered it all trivial, and was there only by way of a joke, anyway. He had autograph pictures of all the members of the stock company which he showed his classmates, telling them the most incredible stories of his familiarity with these people, of his acquaintance with the soloists who came to Carnegie Hall, his suppers with them and the flowers he sent them. When these stories lost their effect, and his audience grew listless, he would bid all the boys good-bye, announcing that he was going to travel for a while; going to Naples, to California, to Egypt. Then, next Monday, he would slip back, conscious and nervously smiling; his sister was ill, and he would have to defer his voyage until spring.

Matters went steadily worse with Paul at school. In the itch to let his instructors know how heartily he despised them, and how thoroughly he was appreciated elsewhere, he mentioned once or twice that he had no time to fool with theorems; adding — with a twitch of the eyebrows and a touch of that nervous bravado which so perplexed them — that he was helping the people down at the stock company; they were old friends of his.

The upshot of the matter was, that the Principal went to Paul's father, and Paul was taken out of school and put to work. The manager at Carnegie Hall was told to get another usher in his stead; the doorkeeper at the theater was warned not to admit him to the house; and Charley Edwards remorsefully promised the boy's father not to see him again.

The members of the stock company were vastly amused when some of Paul's stories reached them — especially the women. They were hard-working women, most of them supporting indolent husbands or brothers, and they laughed rather bitterly at having stirred the boy to such fervid and florid inventions. They agreed with the faculty and with his father, that Paul's was a bad case.

The east-bound train was plowing through a January snow-storm; the dull dawn was beginning to show gray when the engine whistled a mile out of New-

ark. Paul started up from the seat where he had lain curled in uneasy slumber, rubbed the breath-misted window glass with his hand, and peered out. The snow was whirling in curling eddies above the white bottom lands, and the drifts lay already deep in the fields and along the fences, while here and there the long dead grass and dried weed stalks protruded black above it. Lights shone from the scattered houses, and a gang of laborers who stood beside the track waved their lanterns.

Paul had slept very little, and he felt grimy and uncomfortable. He had made the all-night journey in a day coach because he was afraid if he took a Pullman he might be seen by some Pittsburgh business man who had noticed him in Denny & Carson's office. When the whistle woke him, he clutched quickly at his breast pocket, glancing about him with an uncertain smile. But the little, clay-bespattered Italians were still sleeping, the slatternly women across the aisle were in open-mouthed oblivion, and even the crumby, crying babies were for the nonce stilled. Paul settled back to struggle with his impatience as best he could.

When he arrived at the Jersey City Station, he hurried through his breakfast, manifestly ill at ease and keeping a sharp eye about him. After he reached the Twenty-third Street Station, he consulted a cabman, and had himself driven to a men's furnishing establishment which was just opening for the day. He spent upward of two hours there, buying with endless reconsidering and great care. His new street suit he put on in the fitting-room; the frock coat and dress clothes he had bundled into the cab with his new shirts. Then he drove to a hatter's and a shoe house. His next errand was at Tiffany's, where he selected silver-mounted brushes and a scarf-pin. He would not wait to have his silver marked, he said. Lastly, he stopped at a trunk shop on Broadway, and had his purchases packed into various traveling bags.

It was a little after one o'clock when he drove up to the Waldorf, and, after settling with the cabman, went into the office. He registered from Washington; said his mother and father had been abroad, and that he had come down to await the arrival of their steamer. He told his story plausibly and had no trouble, since he offered to pay for them in advance, in engaging his rooms; a sleeping-room, sitting-room and bath.

Not once, but a hundred times Paul had planned this entry into New York. He had gone over every detail of it with Charley Edwards, and in his scrap book at home there were pages of description about New York hotels, cut from the Sunday papers.

When he was shown to his sitting-room on the eighth floor, he saw at a glance that everything was as it should be; there was but one detail in his mental picture that the place did not realize, so he rang for the bell boy and sent him down for flowers. He moved about nervously until the boy returned, putting away his new linen and fingering it delightedly as he did so. When the flowers

came, he put them hastily into water, and then tumbled into a hot bath. Presently he came out of his white bath-room, resplendent in his new silk underwear, and playing with the tassels of his red robe. The snow was whirling so fiercely outside his windows that he could scarcely see across the street; but within, the air was deliciously soft and fragrant. He put the violets and jonquils on the tabouret beside the couch, and threw himself down with a long sigh, covering himself with a Roman blanket. He was thoroughly tired; he had been in such haste, he had stood up to such a strain, covered so much ground in the last twenty-four hours, that he wanted to think how it had all come about. Lulled by the sound of the wind, the warm air and the cool fragrance of the flowers, he sank into deep, drowsy retrospection.

It had been wonderfully simple; when they had shut him out of the theater and concert hall, when they had taken away his bone, the whole thing was virtually determined. The rest was a mere matter of opportunity. The only thing that at all surprised him was his own courage — for he realized well enough that he had always been tormented by fear, a sort of apprehensive dread that, of late years, as the meshes of the lies he had told closed about him, had been pulling the muscles of his body tighter and tighter. Until now, he could not remember a time when he had not been dreading something. Even when he was a little boy, it was always there — behind him, or before, or on either side. There had always been the shadowed corner, the dark place into which he dared not look, but from which something seemed always to be watching him — and Paul had done things that were not pretty to watch, he knew.

But now he had a curious sense of relief, as though he had at last thrown the gauntlet to the thing in the corner.

Yet it was but a day since he had been sulking in the traces; but yesterday afternoon that he had been sent to the bank with Denny & Carson's deposit as usual — but this time he was instructed to leave the book to be balanced. There was above two thousand dollars in checks, and nearly a thousand in the bank notes which he had taken from the book and quietly transferred to his pocket. At the bank he had made out a new deposit slip. His nerves had been steady enough to permit of his returning to the office, where he had finished his work and asked for a full day's holiday tomorrow, Saturday, giving a perfectly reasonable pretext. The bank book, he knew, would not be returned before Monday or Tuesday, and his father would be out of town for the next week. From the time he slipped the bank notes into his pocket until he boarded the night train for New York, he had not known a moment's hesitation.

How astonishingly easy it had all been; here he was, the thing done; and this time there would be no awakening, no figure at the top of the stairs. He watched the snowflakes whirling by his window until he fell asleep.

When he awoke, it was four o'clock in the afternoon. He bounded up with a start; one of his precious days gone already! He spent nearly an hour in dress-

ing, watching every stage of his toilet carefully in the mirror. Everything was quite perfect; he was exactly the kind of boy he had always wanted to be.

When he went downstairs, Paul took a carriage and drove up Fifth Avenue toward the Park. The snow had somewhat abated; carriages and tradesmen's wagons were hurrying soundlessly to and fro in the winter twilight; boys in woolen mufflers were shoveling off the doorsteps; the avenue stages made fine spots of color against the white street. Here and there on the corners were stands, with whole flower gardens blooming behind glass windows, against which the snowflakes stuck and melted; violets, roses, carnations, lilies of the valley — somehow vastly more lovely and alluring that they blossomed thus unnaturally in the snow. The Park itself was a wonderful stage winter piece.

When he returned, the pause of the twilight had ceased, and the tune of the streets had changed. The snow was falling faster, lights streamed from the hotels that reared their many stories fearlessly up into the storm, defying the raging Atlantic winds. A long, black stream of carriages poured down the avenue, intersected here and there by other streams, tending horizontally. There were a score of cabs about the entrance of his hotel, and his driver had to wait. Boys in livery were running up and down the red velvet carpet laid from the door to the street. Above, about, within it all, was the rumble and roar, the hurry and toss of thousands of human beings as hot for pleasure as himself, and on every side of him towered the glaring affirmation of the omnipotence of wealth.

The boy set his teeth and drew his shoulders together in a spasm of realization; the plot of all dramas, the text of all romances, the nerve-stuff of all sensations was whirling about him like the snowflakes. He burnt like a faggot in a tempest.

When Paul came down to dinner, the music of the orchestra floated up the elevator shaft to greet him. As he stepped into the thronged corridor, he sank back into one of the chairs against the wall to get his breath. The lights, the chatter, the perfumes, the bewildering medley of color — he had, for a moment, the feeling of not being able to stand it. But only for a moment; these were his own people, he told himself. He went slowly about the corridors, through the writing-rooms, smoking-rooms, reception-rooms, as though he were exploring the chambers of an enchanted palace, built and peopled for him alone.

When he reached the dining-room he sat down at a table near a window. The flowers, the white linen, the many-colored wine glasses, the gay toilettes of the women, the low popping of corks, the undulating repetitions of the *Blue Danube* from the orchestra, all flooded Paul's dream with bewildering radiance. When the roseate tinge of his champagne was added — that cold, precious bubbling stuff that creamed and foamed in his glass — Paul wondered that there were honest men in the world at all. This was what all the world was fighting for, he reflected; this was what all the struggle was about. He doubted the reality of his past. Had he ever known a place called Cordelia Street, a place where fagged-looking business men boarded the early car? Mere rivets in a



machine they seemed to Paul, — sickening men, with combings of children's hair always hanging to their coats, and the smell of cooking in their clothes. Cordelia Street — ah, that belonged to another time and country! Had he not always been thus, had he not sat here night after night, from as far back as he could remember, looking pensively over just such shimmering textures, and slowly twirling the stem of a glass like this one between his thumb and middle finger? He rather thought he had.

He was not in the least abashed or lonely. He had no especial desire to meet or to know any of these people; all he demanded was the right to look on and conjecture, to watch the pageant. The mere stage properties were all he contended for. Nor was he lonely later in the evening, in his loge at the Opera. He was entirely rid of his nervous misgivings, of his forced aggressiveness, of the imperative desire to show himself different from his surroundings. He felt now that his surroundings explained him. Nobody questioned his purple; he had only to wear it passively. He had only to glance down at his dress coat to reassure himself that here it would be impossible for any one to humiliate him.

He found it hard to leave his beautiful sitting-room to go to bed that night, and sat long watching the raging storm from his turret window. When he went to sleep, it was with the lights turned on in his bedroom; partly because of his old timidity, and partly so that, if he should wake in the night, there would be no wretched moment of doubt, no horrible suspicion of yellow wall-paper, or of Washington and Calvin above his bed.

On Sunday morning the city was practically snowbound. Paul breakfasted late, and in the afternoon he fell in with a wild San Francisco boy, a freshman at Yale, who said he had run down for a "little flyer" over Sunday. The young man offered to show Paul the night side of the town, and the two boys went off together after dinner, not returning to the hotel until seven o'clock the next morning. They had started out in the confiding warmth of a champagne friendship, but their parting in the elevator was singularly cool. The freshman pulled himself together to make his train, and Paul went to bed. He awoke at two o'clock in the afternoon, very thirsty and dizzy, and rang for ice-water, coffee, and the Pittsburgh paper.

On the part of the hotel management, Paul excited no suspicion. There was this to be said for him, that he wore his spoils with dignity and in no way made himself conspicuous. His chief greediness lay in his ears and eyes, and his excesses were not offensive ones. His dearest pleasures were the gray winter twilights in his sitting-room; his quiet enjoyment of his flowers, his clothes, his wide divan, his cigarette and his sense of power. He could not remember a time when he had felt so at peace with himself. The mere release from the necessity of petty lying, lying every day and every day, restored his self-respect. He had never lied for pleasure, even at school; but to make himself noticed and admired, to assert his difference from other Cordelia Street boys; and he felt a good deal

more manly, more honest, even, now that he had no need for boastful pretensions, now that he could, as his actor friends used to say, "dress the part." It was characteristic that remorse did not occur to him. His golden days went by without a shadow, and he made each as perfect as he could.

On the eighth day after his arrival in New York, he found the whole affair exploited in the Pittsburgh papers, exploited with a wealth of detail which indicated that local news of a sensational nature was at a low ebb. The firm of Denny & Carson announced that the boy's father had refunded the full amount of his theft, and that they had no intention of prosecuting. The Cumberland minister had been interviewed, and expressed his hope of yet reclaiming the motherless lad, and Paul's Sabbath-school teacher declared that she would spare no effort to that end. The rumor had reached Pittsburgh that the boy had been seen in a New York hotel, and his father had gone East to find him and bring him home.

Paul had just come in to dress for dinner; he sank into a chair, weak in the knees, and clasped his head in his hands. It was to be worse than jail, even; the tepid waters of Cordelia Street were to close over him finally and forever. The gray monotony stretched before him in hopeless, unrelieved years; Sabbath-school, Young People's Meeting, the yellow-papered room, the damp dish-towels; it all rushed back upon him with sickening vividness. He had the old feeling that the orchestra had suddenly stopped, the sinking sensation that the play was over. The sweat broke out on his face, and he sprang to his feet, looked about him with his white, conscious smile, and winked at himself in the mirror. With something of the childish belief in miracles with which he had so often gone to class, all his lessons unlearned, Paul dressed and dashed whistling down the corridor to the elevator.

He had no sooner entered the dining-room and caught the measure of the music, than his remembrance was lightened by his old elastic power of claiming the moment, mounting with it, and finding it all-sufficient. The glare and glitter about him, the mere scenic accessories had again, and for the last time, their old potency. He would show himself that he was game, he would finish the thing splendidly. He doubted, more than ever, the existence of Cordelia Street, and for the first time he drank his wine recklessly. Was he not, after all, one of these fortunate beings? Was he not still himself, and in his own place? He drummed a nervous accompaniment to the music and looked about him, telling himself over and over that it had paid.

He reflected drowsily, to the swell of the violin and the chill sweetness of his wine, that he might have done it more wisely. He might have caught an out-bound steamer and been well out of their clutches before now. But the other side of the world had seemed too far away and too uncertain then; he could not have waited for it; his need had been too sharp. If he had to choose over again, he would do the same thing tomorrow. He looked affectionately about the dining-room, now gilded with a soft mist. Ah, it had paid indeed!

Paul was awakened next morning by a painful throbbing in his head and feet. He had thrown himself across the bed without undressing, and had slept with his shoes on. His limbs and hands were lead-heavy, and his tongue and throat were parched. There came upon him one of those fateful attacks of clear-headedness that never occurred except when he was physically exhausted and his nerves hung loose. He lay still and closed his eyes and let the tide of his realities wash over him.

His father was in New York; "stopping at some joint or other," he told himself. The memory of successive summers on the front stoop fell upon him like a weight of black water. He had not a hundred dollars left; and he knew now, more than ever, that money was everything, the wall that stood between all he loathed and all he wanted. The thing was winding itself up; he had thought of that on his first glorious day in New York, and had even provided a way to snap the thread. It lay on his dressing-table now; he had got it out last night when he came blindly up from dinner, — but the shiny metal hurt his eyes, and he disliked the look of it, anyway.

He rose and moved about with a painful effort, succumbing now and again to attacks of nausea. It was the old depression exaggerated; all the world had become Cordelia Street. Yet somehow he was not afraid of anything, was absolutely calm; perhaps because he had looked into the dark corner at last, and knew. It was bad enough, what he saw there; but somehow not so bad as his long fear of it had been. He saw everything clearly now. He had a feeling that he had made the best of it, that he had lived the sort of life he was meant to live, and for half an hour he sat staring at the revolver. But he told himself that was not the way, so he went downstairs and took a cab to the ferry.

When Paul arrived at Newark, he got off the train and took another cab, directing the driver to follow the Pennsylvania tracks out of the town. The snow lay heavy on the roadways and had drifted deep in the open fields. Only here and there the dead grass or dried weed stalks projected, singularly black, above it. Once well into the country, Paul dismissed the carriage and walked, floundering along the tracks, his mind a medley of irrelevant things. He seemed to hold in his brain an actual picture of everything he had seen that morning. He remembered every feature of both his drivers, the toothless old woman from whom he had bought the red flowers in his coat, the agent from whom he had got his ticket, and all of his fellow-passengers on the ferry. His mind, unable to cope with vital matters near at hand, worked feverishly and deftly at sorting and grouping these images. They made for him a part of the ugliness of the world, of the ache in his head, and the bitter burning on his tongue. He stooped and put a handful of snow into his mouth as he walked, but that, too, seemed hot. When he reached a little hillside, where the tracks ran through a cut some twenty feet below him, he stopped and sat down.

The carnations in his coat were drooping with the cold, he noticed; all their

red glory over. It occurred to him that all the flowers he had seen in the show windows that first night must have gone the same way, long before this. It was only one splendid breath they had, in spite of their brave mockery at the winter outside the glass. It was a losing game in the end, it seemed, this revolt against the homilies by which the world is run. Paul took one of the blossoms carefully from his coat and scooped a little hole in the snow, where he covered it up. Then he dozed a while.

The sound of an approaching train woke him, and he started to his feet, remembering only his resolution, and afraid lest he should be too late. He stood watching the approaching locomotive, his teeth chattering, his lips drawn away from them in a frightened smile; once or twice he glanced nervously sidewise, as though he were being watched. When the right moment came, he jumped. As he fell, the folly of his haste occurred to him with merciless clearness, the vastness of what he had left undone. There flashed through his brain, clearer than ever before, the blue of Adriatic water, the yellow of Algerian sands.

He felt something strike his chest, — his body was being thrown swiftly through the air, on and on, immeasurably far and fast, while his limbs gently relaxed. Then, because the picture-making mechanism was crushed, the disturbing visions flashed into black, and Paul dropped back into the immense design of things.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What does the first paragraph of this story contribute to plot? characterization? setting?
2. What details of dress and behavior bring out the aesthete in Paul?
3. What reasons are suggested for Paul's maladjustment?
4. What incident early in the story shows his feelings about his home? What is symbolized by "the shadowed corner, the dark place" into which Paul dares not look?
5. What is the crisis or turning point in the story, after which Paul is doomed? What is the climax? Is the ending plausible?
6. Compare Paul (around 1900) with contemporary juvenile delinquents.

*James Joyce, most widely discussed novelist of modern times, left his native Ireland to live in exile on the Continent — in Trieste, in Switzerland (during World War I), finally in Paris. Dedicating himself to art, he worked out a new mode of expression in his difficult Ulysses (1922) and Finnegans Wake (1939), an allusive, stream-of-consciousness style which has influenced many writers, including, most recently, John Hersey in Hiroshima. Joyce's short stories, published in Dubliners (1914), are written more simply. He called them "epiphanies" ("epiphany" is from a Greek word meaning a "showing"); their purpose is "to illuminate a certain moment of . . . everyday life." The author remains aloof and passes no judgment on his characters.*

North Richmond Street, being blind, was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' School set the boys free. An uninhabited house of two stories stood at the blind end, detached from its neighbors in a square ground. The other houses of the street, conscious of decent lives within them, gazed at one another with brown imperturbable faces.

The former tenant of our house, a priest, had died in the back drawing room. Air, musty from having been long enclosed, hung in all the rooms, and the waste room behind the kitchen was littered with old useless papers. Among these I found a few paper-covered books, the pages of which were curled and damp: *The Abbot*, by Walter Scott, *The Devout Communicant*, and *The Memoirs of Vidocq*. I liked the last best because its leaves were yellow. The wild garden behind the house contained a central apple tree and a few straggling bushes under one of which I found the late tenant's rusty bicycle pump. He had been a very charitable priest; in his will he had left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to his sister.

When the short days of winter came dusk fell before we had well eaten our dinners. When we met in the street the houses had grown somber. The space of sky above us was the color of ever-changing violet and towards it the lamps of the street lifted their feeble lanterns. The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed. Our shouts echoed in the silent street. The career of our play brought us through the dark muddy lanes behind the houses where we ran the gauntlet of the rough tribes from the cottages, to the back doors of the dark dripping gardens where odors arose from the ashpits, to the dark odorous stables where a coachman smoothed and combed the horse or shook music from the buckled harness. When we returned to the street, light from the kitchen windows had filled the areas. If my uncle was seen turning the corner we hid in the shadow until we had seen him safely housed. Or if Mangan's sister came out on the door-

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step to call her brother in to his tea we watched her from our shadow peer up and down the street. We waited to see whether she would remain or go in and, if she remained, we left our shadow and walked up to Mangan's steps resignedly. She was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door. Her brother always teased her before he obeyed and I stood by the railings looking at her. Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope of her hair tossed from side to side.

Every morning I lay on the floor in the front parlor watching her door. The blind was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen. When she came out on the doorstep my heart leaped. I ran to the hall, seized my books and followed her. I kept her brown figure always in my eye and, when we came near the point at which our ways diverged, I quickened my pace and passed her. This happened morning after morning. I had never spoken to her, except for a few casual words, and yet her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood.

Her image accompanied me even in places the most hostile to romance. On Saturday evenings when my aunt went marketing I had to go to carry some of the parcels. We walked through the flaring streets, jostled by drunken men and bargaining women, amid the curses of laborers, the shrill litanies of shop boys who stood on guard by the barrels of pigs' cheeks, the nasal chanting of street singers, who sang a *come-all-you* about O'Donovan Rossa, or a ballad about the troubles in our native land. These noises converged in a single sensation of life for me: I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand. My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom. I thought little of the future. I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or, if I spoke to her, how I could tell her of my confused adoration. But my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires.

One evening I went into the back drawing room in which the priest had died. It was a dark rainy evening and there was no sound in the house. Through one of the broken panes I heard the rain impinge upon the earth, the fine incessant needles of water playing in the sodden beds. Some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful that I could see so little. All my senses seemed to desire to veil themselves and, feeling that I was about to slip from them, I pressed the palms of my hands together until they trembled, murmuring: "*O love! O love!*" many times.

At last she spoke to me. When she addressed the first words to me I was so confused that I did not know what to answer. She asked me was I going to *Araby*. I forgot whether I answered yes or no. It would be a splendid bazaar, she said; she would love to go.

"And why can't you?" I asked.

While she spoke she turned a silver bracelet round and round her wrist. She could not go, she said, because there would be a retreat that week in her convent. Her brother and two other boys were fighting for their caps and I was alone at the railings. She held one of the spikes, bowing her head towards me. The light from the lamp opposite our door caught the white curve of her neck, lit up her hair that rested there and, falling, lit up the hand upon the railing. It fell over one side of her dress and caught the white border of a petticoat, just visible as she stood at ease.

"It's well for you," she said.

"If I go," I said, "I will bring you something."

What innumerable follies laid waste my waking and sleeping thoughts after that evening! I wished to annihilate the tedious intervening days. I chafed against the work of school. At night in my bedroom and by day in the classroom her image came between me and the page I strove to read. The syllables of the word *Araby* were called to me through the silence in which my soul luxuriated and cast an Eastern enchantment over me. I asked for leave to go to the bazaar on Saturday night. My aunt was surprised and hoped it was not some Freemason affair. I answered few questions in class. I watched my master's face pass from amiability to sternness; he hoped I was not beginning to idle. I could not call my wandering thoughts together. I had hardly any patience with the serious work of life which, now that it stood between me and my desire, seemed to me child's play, ugly monotonous child's play.

On Saturday morning I reminded my uncle that I wished to go to the bazaar in the evening. He was fussing at the hall stand, looking for the hat brush, and answered me curtly:

"Yes, boy, I know."

As he was in the hall I could not go into the front parlor and lie at the window. I left the house in bad humor and walked slowly towards the school. The air was pitilessly raw and already my heart misgave me.

When I came home to dinner my uncle had not yet been home. Still it was early. I sat staring at the clock for some time and, when its ticking began to irritate me, I left the room. I mounted the staircase and gained the upper part of the house. The high cold empty gloomy rooms liberated me and I went from room to room singing. From the front window I saw my companions playing below in the street. Their cries reached me weakened and indistinct and, leaning my forehead against the cool glass, I looked over at the dark house where she lived. I may have stood there for an hour, seeing nothing but the brown-clad figure cast by my imagination, touched discreetly by the lamplight at the curved neck, at the hand upon the railings and at the border below the dress.

When I came downstairs again I found Mrs. Mercer sitting at the fire. She was an old garrulous woman, a pawnbroker's widow, who collected used stamps

for some pious purpose. I had to endure the gossip of the tea table. The meal was prolonged beyond an hour and still my uncle did not come. Mrs. Mercer stood up to go: she was sorry she couldn't wait any longer, but it was after eight o'clock and she did not like to be out late, as the night air was bad for her. When she had gone I began to walk up and down the room, clenching my fists. My aunt said:

"I'm afraid you may put off your bazaar for this night of Our Lord."

At nine o'clock I heard my uncle's latchkey in the hall door. I heard him talking to himself and heard the hall stand rocking when it had received the weight of his overcoat. I could interpret these signs. When he was midway through his dinner I asked him to give me the money to go to the bazaar. He had forgotten.

"The people are in bed and after their first sleep now," he said.

I did not smile. My aunt said to him energetically:

"Can't you give him the money and let him go? You've kept him late enough as it is."

My uncle said he was very sorry he had forgotten. He said he believed in the old saying: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." He asked me where I was going and, when I had told him a second time he asked me did I know *The Arab's Farewell to His Steed*. When I left the kitchen he was about to recite the opening lines of the piece to my aunt.

I held a florin tightly in my hand as I strode down Buckingham Street towards the station. The sight of the streets thronged with buyers and glaring with gas recalled to me the purpose of my journey. I took my seat in a third-class carriage of a deserted train. After an intolerable delay the train moved out of the station slowly. It crept onward among ruinous houses and over the twinkling river. At Westland Row Station a crowd of people pressed to the carriage doors; but the porters moved them back, saying that it was a special train for the bazaar. I remained alone in the bare carriage. In a few minutes the train drew up beside an improvised wooden platform. I passed out on to the road and saw by the lighted dial of a clock that it was ten minutes to ten. In front of me was a large building which displayed the magical name.

I could not find any sixpenny entrance and, fearing that the bazaar would be closed, I passed in quickly through a turnstile, handing a shilling to a weary-looking man. I found myself in a big hall girdled at half its height by a gallery. Nearly all the stalls were closed and the greater part of the hall was in darkness. I recognized a silence like that which pervades a church after a service. I walked into the center of the bazaar timidly. A few people were gathered about the stalls which were still open. Before a curtain, over which the words *Café Chantant* were written in colored lamps, two men were counting money on a salver. I listened to the fall of the coins.

Remembering with difficulty why I had come I went over to one of the stalls



and examined porcelain vases and flowered tea sets. At the door of the stall a young lady was talking and laughing with two young gentlemen. I remarked their English accents and listened vaguely to their conversation.

"O, I never said such a thing!"

"O, but you did!"

"O, but I didn't!"

"Didn't she say that?"

"Yes. I heard her."

"O, there's a . . . fib!"

Observing me, the young lady came over and asked me did I wish to buy anything. The tone of her voice was not encouraging; she seemed to have spoken to me out of a sense of duty. I looked humbly at the great jars that stood like eastern guards at either side of the dark entrance to the stall and murmured:

"No, thank you."

The young lady changed the position of one of the vases and went back to the two young men. They began to talk of the same subject. Once or twice the young lady glanced at me over her shoulder.

I lingered before her stall, though I knew my stay was useless, to make my interest in her wares seem the more real. Then I turned away slowly and walked down the middle of the bazaar. I allowed the two pennies to fall against the sixpence in my pocket. I heard a voice call from one end of the gallery that the light was out. The upper part of the hall was now completely dark.

Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger.

#### QUESTIONS

1. How soon after the action takes place is this story told?
2. In what ways does the writer bring out the universality of the boy's experience?
3. What figure of speech does the boy use to describe how he felt about the girl? What other striking figure emphasizes the central idea of the story?
4. Explain the title. Is "Araby" a simple love story, or more than that?
5. List all the elements which, combined, heighten the boy's final disappointment to "anguish."

*Katherine Mansfield, outstanding British short story writer, was born Katherine Mansfield Beauchamp, in New Zealand. She studied at Queens College, London, and was interested in both music and writing. She met John Middleton Murry, who was to become a famous critic and whom she later married, and also D. H. Lawrence. After years of ill-health and struggle as a free-lance writer and reviewer, she achieved success with Bliss and Other Stories (1920) and The Garden Party (1922). Critics praised her for capturing the essence of Chekhov's art, for stories emphasizing atmosphere and actual life rather than exciting plot, for her "refreshing originality" and "sensitiveness to beauty." Just as she won world fame, however, her health grew worse; she died of tuberculosis in 1923.*

And after all the weather was ideal. They could not have had a more perfect day for a garden-party if they had ordered it. Windless, warm, the sky without a cloud. Only the blue was veiled with a haze of light gold, as it is sometimes in early summer. The gardener had been up since dawn, mowing the lawns and sweeping them, until the grass and the dark flat rosettes where the daisy plants had been seemed to shine. As for the roses, you could not help feeling they understood that roses are the only flowers that impress people at garden-parties; the only flowers that everybody is certain of knowing. Hundreds, yes, literally hundreds, had come out in a single night; the green bushes bowed down as though they had been visited by archangels.

Breakfast was not yet over before the men came to put up the marquee.

"Where do you want the marquee put, mother?"

"My dear child, it's no use asking me. I'm determined to leave everything to you children this year. Forget I am your mother. Treat me as an honoured guest."

But Meg could not possibly go and supervise the men. She had washed her hair before breakfast, and she sat drinking her coffee in a green turban, with a dark wet curl stamped on each cheek. Jose, the butterfly, always came down in a silk petticoat and a kimono jacket.

"You'll have to go, Laura; you're the artistic one."

Away Laura flew, still holding her piece of bread-and-butter. It's so delicious to have an excuse for eating out of doors, and besides, she loved having to arrange things; she always felt she could do it so much better than anybody else.

Four men in their shirt-sleeves stood grouped together on the garden path. They carried staves covered with rolls of canvas, and they had big tool-bags slung on their backs. They looked impressive. Laura wished now that she had

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not got the bread-and-butter, but there was nowhere to put it, and she couldn't possibly throw it away. She blushed and tried to look severe and even a little bit short-sighted as she came up to them.

"Good morning," she said, copying her mother's voice. But that sounded so fearfully affected that she was ashamed, and stammered like a little girl, "Oh — er — have you come — is it about the marquee?"

"That's right, miss," said the tallest of the men, a lanky freckled fellow, and he shifted his tool-bag, knocked back his straw hat and smiled down at her.

"That's about it."

His smile was so easy, so friendly that Laura recovered. What nice eyes he had, small, but such a dark blue! And now she looked at the others, they were smiling too. "Cheer up, we won't bite," their smile seemed to say. How very nice workmen were! And what a beautiful morning! She mustn't mention the morning; she must be business-like. The marquee.

"Well, what about the lily-lawn? Would that do?"

And she pointed to the lily-lawn with the hand that didn't hold the bread-and-butter. They turned, they stared in the direction. A little fat chap thrust out his under-lip, and the tall fellow frowned.

"I don't fancy it," said he. "Not conspicuous enough. You see, with a thing like a marquee," and he turned to Laura in his easy way, "you want to put it somewhere where it'll give you a bang slap in the eye, if you follow me."

Laura's upbringing made her wonder for a moment whether it was quite respectful of a workman to talk to her of bangs slap in the eye. But she did quite follow him.

"A corner of the tennis-court," she suggested. "But the band's going to be in one corner."

"H'm, going to have a band, are you?" said another of the workmen. He was pale. He had a haggard look as his dark eyes scanned the tennis-court. What was he thinking?

"Only a very small band," said Laura gently. Perhaps he wouldn't mind so much if the band was quite small. But the tall fellow interrupted.

"Look here, miss, that's the place. Against those trees. Over there. That'll do fine."

Against the karakas. Then the karaka-trees would be hidden. And they were so lovely, with their broad, gleaming leaves, and their clusters of yellow fruit. They were like trees you imagined growing on a desert island, proud, solitary, lifting their leaves and fruits to the sun in a kind of silent splendour. Must they be hidden by a marquee?

They must. Already the men had shouldered their staves and were making for the place. Only the tall fellow was left. He bent down, pinched a sprig of lavender, put his thumb and forefinger to his nose and snuffed up the smell. When Laura saw that gesture she forgot all about the karakas in her wonder at

him caring for things like that — caring for the smell of lavender. How many men that she knew would have done such a thing? Oh, how extraordinarily nice workmen were, she thought. Why couldn't she have workmen for friends rather than the silly boys she danced with and who came to Sunday night supper? She would get on much better with men like these.

It's all the fault, she decided, as the tall fellow drew something on the back of an envelope, something that was to be looped up or left to hang, of these absurd class distinctions. Well, for her part, she didn't feel them. Not a bit, not an atom. . . . And now there came the chock-chock of wooden hammers. Some one whistled, some one sang out, "Are you right there, matey?" "Matey!" The friendliness of it, the — the — Just to prove how happy she was, just to show the tall fellow how at home she felt, and how she despised stupid conventions, Laura took a big bite of her bread-and-butter as she stared at the little drawing. She felt just like a work-girl.

"Laura, Laura, where are you? Telephone, Laura!" a voice cried from the house.

"Coming!" Away she skimmed, over the lawn, up the path, up the steps, across the veranda, and into the porch. In the hall her father and Laurie were brushing their hats ready to go to the office.

"I say, Laura," said Laurie very fast, "you might just give a squiz at my coat before this afternoon. See if it wants pressing."

"I will," said she. Suddenly she couldn't stop herself. She ran at Laurie and gave him a small, quick squeeze. "Oh, I do love parties, don't you?" gasped Laura.

"Ra-ther," said Laurie's warm, boyish voice, and he squeezed his sister too, and gave her a gentle push. "Dash off to the telephone, old girl."

The telephone. "Yes, yes; oh yes. Kitty? Good morning, dear. Come to lunch? Do, dear. Delighted of course. It will only be a very scratch meal — just the sandwich crusts and broken meringue-shells and what's left over. Yes, isn't it a perfect morning? Your white? Oh, I certainly should. One moment — hold the line. Mother's calling." And Laura sat back. "What, mother? Can't hear."

Mrs. Sheridan's voice floated down the stairs. "Tell her to wear that sweet hat she had on last Sunday."

"Mother says you're to wear that *sweet* hat you had on last Sunday. Good. One o'clock. Bye-bye."

Laura put back the receiver, flung her arms over her head, took a deep breath, stretched and let them fall. "Huh," she sighed, and the moment after the sigh she sat up quickly. She was still, listening. All the doors in the house seemed to be open. The house was alive with soft, quick steps and running voices. The green baize door that led to the kitchen regions swung open and shut with a muffled thud. And now there came a long, chuckling absurd sound. It was the heavy piano being moved on its stiff castors. But the air! If you stopped to notice, was

the air always like this? Little faint winds were playing chase, in at the tops of the windows, out at the doors. And there were two tiny spots of sun, one on the inkpot, one on a silver photograph frame, playing too. Darling little spots. Especially the one on the inkpot lid. It was quite warm. A warm little silver star. She could have kissed it.

The front door bell pealed, and there sounded the rustle of Sadie's print skirt on the stairs. A man's voice murmured; Sadie answered, careless, "I'm sure I don't know. Wait. I'll ask Mrs. Sheridan."

"What is it, Sadie?" Laura came into the hall.

"It's the florist, Miss Laura."

It was, indeed. There, just inside the door, stood a wide, shallow tray full of pots of pink lilies. No other kind. Nothing but lilies — canna lilies, big pink flowers, wide open, radiant, almost frighteningly alive on bright crimson stems.

"O-oh, Sadie!" said Laura, and the sound was like a little moan. She crouched down as if to warm herself at that blaze of lilies; she felt they were in her fingers, on her lips, growing in her breast.

"It's some mistake," she said faintly. "Nobody ever ordered so many. Sadie, go and find mother."

But at that moment Mrs. Sheridan joined them.

"It's quite right," she said calmly. "Yes, I ordered them. Aren't they lovely?" She pressed Laura's arm. "I was passing the shop yesterday, and I saw them in the window. And I suddenly thought for once in my life I shall have enough canna lilies. The garden-party will be a good excuse."

"But I thought you said you didn't mean to interfere," said Laura. Sadie had gone. The florist's man was still outside at his van. She put her arm round her mother's neck and gently, very gently, she bit her mother's ear.

"My darling child, you wouldn't like a logical mother, would you? Don't do that. Here's the man."

He carried more lilies still, another whole tray.

"Bank them up, just inside the door, on both sides of the porch, please," said Mrs. Sheridan. "Don't you agree, Laura?"

"Oh, I *do*, mother."

In the drawing-room Meg, Jose and good little Hans had at last succeeded in moving the piano.

"Now, if we put this chesterfield against the wall and move everything out of the room except the chairs, don't you think?"

"Quite."

"Hans, move these tables into the smoking-room, and bring a sweeper to take these marks off the carpet and — one moment, Hans —" Jose loved giving orders to the servants, and they loved obeying her. She always made them feel they were taking part in some drama. "Tell mother and Miss Laura to come here at once."

"Very good, Miss Jose."

She turned to Meg. "I want to hear what the piano sounds like, just in case I'm asked to sing this afternoon. Let's try over 'This Life is Weary.' "

*Pom! Ta-ta-ta Tee-ta!* The piano burst out so passionately that Jose's face changed. She clasped her hands. She looked mournfully and enigmatically at her mother and Laura as they came in.

This Life is *Wee*-ary,  
A Tear — a Sigh.  
A Love that *Chan*-ges,  
This Life is *Wee*-ary,  
A Tear — a Sigh.  
A Love that *Chan*-ges,  
And then . . . Good-bye!

But at the word "Good-bye," and although the piano sounded more desperate than ever, her face broke into a brilliant, dreadfully unsympathetic smile.

"Aren't I in good voice, mummy?" she beamed.

This Life is *Wee*-ary,  
Hope comes to Die.  
A Dream — a *Wa*-kening.

But now Sadie interrupted them. "What is it, Sadie?"

"If you please, m'm, cook says have you got the flags for the sandwiches?"

"The flags for the sandwiches, Sadie?" echoed Mrs. Sheridan dreamily. And the children knew by her face that she hadn't got them. "Let me see." And she said to Sadie firmly, "Tell cook I'll let her have them in ten minutes."

Sadie went.

"Now, Laura," said her mother quickly. "Come with me into the smoking-room. I've got the names somewhere on the back of an envelope. You'll have to write them out for me. Meg, go upstairs this minute and take that wet thing off your head. Jose, run and finish dressing this instant. Do you hear me, children, or shall I have to tell your father when he comes home to-night? And — and, Jose, pacify cook if you do go into the kitchen, will you? I'm terrified of her this morning."

The envelope was found at last behind the dining-room clock, though how it had got there Mrs. Sheridan could not imagine.

"One of you children must have stolen it out of my bag, because I remember vividly — cream cheese and lemon-curd. Have you done that?"

"Yes."

"Egg and —" Mrs. Sheridan held the envelope away from her. "It looks like mice. It can't be mice, can it?"

"Olive, pet," said Laura, looking over her shoulder.

"Yes, of course, olive. What a horrible combination it sounds. Egg and olive."

They were finished at last, and Laura took them off to the kitchen. She found Jose there pacifying the cook, who did not look at all terrifying.

"I have never seen such exquisite sandwiches," said Jose's rapturous voice. "How many kinds did you say there were, cook? Fifteen?"

"Fifteen, Miss Jose."

"Well, cook, I congratulate you."

Cook swept up crusts with the long sandwich knife, and smiled broadly.

"Godber's has come," announced Sadie, issuing out of the pantry. She had seen the man pass the window.

That meant the cream puffs had come. Godber's were famous for their cream puffs. Nobody ever thought of making them at home.

"Bring them in and put them on the table, my girl," ordered cook.

Sadie brought them in and went back to the door. Of course Laura and Jose were far too grown-up to really care about such things. All the same, they couldn't help agreeing that the puffs looked very attractive. Very. Cook began arranging them, shaking off the extra icing sugar.

"Don't they carry one back to all one's parties?" said Laura.

"I suppose they do," said practical Jose, who never liked to be carried back. "They look beautifully light and feathery, I must say."

"Have one each, my dears," said cook in her comfortable voice. "Yer ma won't know."

Oh, impossible. Fancy cream puffs so soon after breakfast. The very idea made one shudder. All the same, two minutes later Jose and Laura were licking their fingers with that absorbed inward look that only comes from whipped cream.

"Let's go into the garden, out by the back way," suggested Laura. "I want to see how the men are getting on with the marquee. They're such awfully nice men."

But the back door was blocked by cook, Sadie, Godber's man and Hans. Something had happened.

"Tuk-tuk-tuk," clucked cook like an agitated hen. Sadie had her hand clapped to her cheek as though she had toothache. Hans's face was screwed up in the effort to understand. Only Godber's man seemed to be enjoying himself; it was his story.

"What's the matter? What's happened?"

"There's been a horrible accident," said cook. "A man killed."

"A man killed! Where? How? When?"

But Godber's man wasn't going to have his story snatched from under his very nose.

"Know those little cottages just below here, miss?" Know them? Of course, she knew them. "Well, there's a young chap living there, name of Scott, a carter. His horse shied at a traction-engine, corner of Hawke Street this morning, and he was thrown out on the back of his head. Killed."

"Dead!" Laura stared at Godber's man.

"Dead when they picked him up," said Godber's man with relish. "They were taking the body home as I come up here." And he said to the cook, "He's left a wife and five little ones."

"Jose, come here." Laura caught hold of her sister's sleeve and dragged her through the kitchen to the other side of the green baize door. There she paused and leaned against it. "Jose!" she said, horrified, "however are we going to stop everything?"

"Stop everything, Laura!" cried Jose in astonishment. "What do you mean?"

"Stop the garden-party, of course." Why did Jose pretend?

But Jose was still more amazed. "Stop the garden-party? My dear Laura, don't be so absurd. Of course we can't do anything of the kind. Nobody expects us to. Don't be so extravagant."

"But we can't possibly have a garden-party with a man dead just outside the front gate."

That really was extravagant, for the little cottages were in a lane to themselves at the very bottom of a steep rise that led up to the house. A broad road ran between. True, they were far too near. They were the greatest possible eyesore, and they had no right to be in that neighbourhood at all. They were little mean dwellings painted a chocolate brown. In the garden patches there was nothing but cabbage stalks, sick hens and tomato cans. The very smoke coming out of their chimneys was poverty-stricken. Little rags and shreds of smoke, so unlike the great silvery plumes that uncurled from the Sheridans' chimneys. Washer-women lived in the lane and sweeps and a cobbler, and a man whose house-front was studded all over with minute bird-cages. Children swarmed. When the Sheridans were little they were forbidden to set foot there because of the revolting language and of what they might catch. But since they were grown up, Laura and Laurie on their prowls sometimes walked through. It was disgusting and sordid. They came out with a shudder. But still one must go everywhere; one must see everything. So through they went.

"And just think of what the band would sound like to that poor woman," said Laura.

"Oh, Laura!" Jose began to be seriously annoyed. "If you're going to stop a band playing every time some one has an accident, you'll lead a very strenuous life. I'm every bit as sorry about it as you. I feel just as sympathetic." Her eyes hardened. She looked at her sister just as she used to when they were little and fighting together. "You won't bring a drunken workman back to life by being sentimental," she said softly.

"Drunk! Who said he was drunk?" Laura turned furiously on Jose. She said, just as they had used to say on those occasions, "I'm going straight up to tell mother."

"Do, dear," cooed Jose.



"Mother, can I come into your room?" Laura turned the big glass doorknob.

"Of course, child. Why, what's the matter? What's given you such a colour?" And Mrs. Sheridan turned round from her dressing-table. She was trying on a new hat.

"Mother, a man's been killed," began Laura.

"*Not* in the garden?" interrupted her mother.

"No, no!"

"Oh, what a fright you gave me!" Mrs. Sheridan sighed with relief, and took off the big hat and held it on her knees.

"But listen, mother," said Laura. Breathless, half-choking, she told the dreadful story. "Of course, we can't have our party, can we?" she pleaded. "The band and everybody arriving. They'd hear us, mother; they're nearly neighbours!"

To Laura's astonishment her mother behaved just like Jose; it was harder to bear because she seemed amused. She refused to take Laura seriously.

"But, my dear child, use your common sense. It's only by accident we've heard of it. If some one had died there normally — and I can't understand how they keep alive in those poky little holes — we should still be having our party, shouldn't we?"

Laura had to say "yes" to that, but she felt it was all wrong. She sat down on her mother's sofa and pinched the cushion frill.

"Mother, isn't it really terribly heartless of us?" she asked.

"Darling!" Mrs. Sheridan got up and came over to her, carrying the hat. Before Laura could stop herself she had popped it on. "My child!" said her mother, "the hat is yours. It's made for you. It's much too young for me. I have never seen you look such a picture. Look at yourself!" And she held up her hand-mirror.

"But, mother," Laura began again. She couldn't look at herself; she turned aside.

This time Mrs. Sheridan lost patience just as Jose had done.

"You are being very absurd, Laura," she said coldly. "People like that don't expect sacrifices from us. And it's not very sympathetic to spoil everybody's enjoyment as you're doing now."

"I don't understand," said Laura, and she walked quickly out of the room into her own bedroom. There, quite by chance, the first thing she saw was this charming girl in the mirror, in her black hat trimmed with gold daisies, and a long black velvet ribbon. Never had she imagined she could look like that. Is mother right? she thought. And now she hoped her mother was right. Am I being extravagant? Perhaps it was extravagant. Just for a moment she had another glimpse of that poor woman and those little children, and the body being carried into the house. But it all seemed blurred, unreal, like a picture in the newspaper. I'll remember it again after the party's over, she decided. And somehow that seemed quite the best plan. . . .

Lunch was over by half-past one. By half-past two they were all ready for the fray. The green-coated band had arrived and was established in a corner of the tennis-court.

"My dear!" trilled Kitty Maitland, "aren't they too like frogs for words? You ought to have arranged them round the pond with the conductor in the middle on a leaf."

Laurie arrived and hailed them on his way to dress. At the sight of him Laura remembered the accident again. She wanted to tell him. If Laurie agreed with the others, then it was bound to be all right. And she followed him into the hall.

"Laurie!"

"Hallo!" He was half-way upstairs, but when he turned round and saw Laura he suddenly puffed out his cheeks and goggled his eyes at her. "My word, Laura! You do look stunning," said Laurie. "What an absolutely topping hat!"

Laura said faintly "Is it?" and smiled up at Laurie, and didn't tell him after all.

Soon after that people began coming in streams. The band struck up; the hired waiters ran from the house to the marquee. Wherever you looked there were couples strolling, bending to the flowers, greeting, moving on over the lawn. They were like bright birds that had alighted in the Sheridans' garden for this one afternoon, on their way to — where? Ah, what happiness it is to be with people who all are happy, to press hands, press cheeks, smile into eyes.

"Darling Laura, how well you look!"

"What a becoming hat, child!"

"Laura, you look quite Spanish. I've never seen you look so striking."

And Laura, glowing, answered softly, "Have you had tea? Won't you have an ice? The passion-fruit ices really are rather special." She ran to her father and begged him. "Daddy darling, can't the band have something to drink?"

And the perfect afternoon slowly ripened, slowly faded, slowly its petals closed.

"Never a more delightful garden party . . ." "The greatest success . . ." "Quite the most . . ."

Laura helped her mother with good-byes. They stood side by side in the porch till it was all over.

"All over, all over, thank heaven," said Mrs. Sheridan. "Round up the others, Laura. Let's go and have some fresh coffee. I'm exhausted. Yes, it's been very successful. But oh, these parties, these parties! Why will you children insist on giving parties!" And they all of them sat down in the deserted marquee.

"Have a sandwich, daddy dear. I wrote the flag."

"Thanks." Mr. Sheridan took a bite and the sandwich was gone. He took another. "I suppose you didn't hear of a beastly accident that happened to-day?" he said.

"My dear," said Mrs. Sheridan, holding up her hand, "we did. It nearly ruined the party. Laura insisted we should put it off."

"Oh, mother!" Laura didn't want to be teased about it.

"It was a horrible affair all the same," said Mr. Sheridan. "The chap was married too. Lived just below in the lane, and leaves a wife and half a dozen kiddies, so they say."

An awkward little silence fell. Mrs. Sheridan fidgeted with her cup. Really, it was very tactless of father . . .

Suddenly she looked up. There on the table were all those sandwiches, cakes, puffs, all uneaten, all going to be wasted. She had one of her brilliant ideas.

"I know," she said. "Let's make up a basket. Let's send that poor creature some of this perfectly good food. At any rate, it will be the greatest treat for the children. Don't you agree? And she's sure to have neighbours calling in and so on. What a point to have it all ready prepared. Laura!" She jumped up. "Get me the big basket out of the stairs cupboard."

"But, mother, do you really think it's a good idea?" said Laura.

Again, how curious, she seemed to be different from them all. To take scraps from their party. Would the poor woman really like that?

"Of course! What's the matter with you to-day? An hour or two ago you were insisting on us being sympathetic, and now —"

Oh, well! Laura ran for the basket. It was filled, it was heaped by her mother.

"Take it yourself, darling," said she. "Run down just as you are. No, wait, take the arum lilies too. People of that class are so impressed by arum lilies."

"The stems will ruin her lace frock," said practical Jose.

So they would. Just in time. "Only the basket, then. And Laura!" — her mother followed her out of the marquee — "don't on any account —"

"What, mother?"

No, better not put such ideas into the child's head! "Nothing! Run along."

It was just growing dusky as Laura shut their garden gates. A big dog ran by like a shadow. The road gleamed white, and down below in the hollow the little cottages were in deep shade. How quiet it seemed after the afternoon. Here she was going down the hill to somewhere where a man lay dead, and she couldn't realize it. Why couldn't she? She stopped a minute. And it seemed to her that kisses, voices, tinkling spoons, laughter, the smell of crushed grass were somehow inside her. She had no room for anything else. How strange! She looked up at the pale sky, and all she thought was, "Yes, it was the most successful party."

Now the broad road was crossed. The lane began, smoky and dark. Women in shawls and men's tweed caps hurried by. Men hung over the palings; the children played in the doorways. A low hum came from the mean little cottages. In some of them there was a flicker of light, and a shadow, crab-like, moved across the window. Laura bent her head and hurried on. She wished now she

had put on a coat. How her frock shone! And the big hat with the velvet streamer — if only it was another hat! Were the people looking at her? They must be. It was a mistake to have come; she knew all along it was a mistake. Should she go back even now?

No, too late. This was the house. It must be. A dark knot of people stood outside. Beside the gate an old, old woman with a crutch sat in a chair, watching. She had her feet on a newspaper. The voices stopped as Laura drew near. The group parted. It was as though she was expected, as though they had known she was coming here.

Laura was terribly nervous. Tossing the velvet ribbon over her shoulder, she said to a woman standing by, "Is this Mrs. Scott's house?" and the woman, smiling queerly, said, "It is, my lass."

Oh, to be away from this! She actually said, "Help me, God," as she walked up the tiny path and knocked. To be away from those staring eyes, or to be covered up in anything, one of those women's shawls even. I'll just leave the basket and go, she decided. I shan't even wait for it to be emptied.

Then the door opened. A little woman in black showed in the gloom.

Laura said, "Are you Mrs. Scott?" But to her horror the woman answered, "Walk in please, miss," and she was shut in the passage.

"No," said Laura, "I don't want to come in. I only want to leave this basket. Mother sent —"

The little woman in the gloomy passage seemed not to have heard her. "Step this way, please, miss," she said in an oily voice, and Laura followed her.

She found herself in a wretched little low kitchen, lighted by a smoky lamp. There was a woman sitting before the fire.

"Em," said the little creature who had led her in. "Em! It's a young lady." She turned to Laura. She said meaningly, "I'm 'er sister, miss. You'll excuse 'er, won't you?"

"Oh, but of course!" said Laura. "Please, please don't disturb her. I — I only want to leave —"

But at that moment the woman at the fire turned round. Her face, puffed up, red, with swollen eyes and swollen lips, looked terrible. She seemed as though she couldn't understand why Laura was there. What did it mean? Why was this stranger standing in the kitchen with a basket? What was it all about? And the poor face puckered up again.

"All right, my dear," said the other. "I'll thenk the young lady."

And again she began, "You'll excuse her, miss, I'm sure," and her face, swollen too, tried an oily smile.

Laura only wanted to get out, to get away. She was back in the passage. The door opened. She walked straight through into the bedroom, where the dead man was lying.

"You'd like a look at 'im, wouldn't you?" said Em's sister, and she brushed past Laura over to the bed. "Don't be afraid, my lass, —" and now her voice sounded fond and sly, and fondly she drew down the sheet — "'e looks a picture. There's nothing to show. Come along, my dear."

Laura came.

There lay a young man, fast asleep — sleeping so soundly, so deeply, that he was far, far away from them both. Oh, so remote, so peaceful. He was dreaming. Never wake him up again. His head was sunk in the pillow, his eyes were closed; they were blind under the closed eyelids. He was given up to his dream. What did garden-parties and baskets and lace frocks matter to him? He was far from all those things. He was wonderful, beautiful. While they were laughing and while the band was playing, this marvel had come to the lane. Happy . . . happy. . . . All is well, said that sleeping face. This is just as it should be. I am content.

But all the same you had to cry, and she couldn't go out of the room without saying something to him. Laura gave a loud childish sob.

"Forgive my hat," she said.

And this time she didn't wait for Em's sister. She found her way out of the door, down the path, past all those dark people. At the corner of the lane she met Laurie.

He stepped out of the shadow. "Is that you, Laura?"

"Yes."

"Mother was getting anxious. Was it all right?"

"Yes, quite. Oh, Laurie!" She took his arm, she pressed up against him.

"I say, you're not crying, are you?" asked her brother.

Laura shook her head. She was.

Laurie put his arm round her shoulder. "Don't cry," he said in his warm, loving voice. "Was it awful?"

"No," sobbed Laura. "It was simply marvellous. But, Laurie —" She stopped, she looked at her brother. "Isn't life," she stammered, "isn't life —" But what life was she couldn't explain. No matter. He quite understood.

"Isn't it, darling?" said Laurie.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What atmosphere is created by the opening scene?
2. How does the author prepare the reader for Laura's desire to stop the party? What persuades her to go ahead and have a good time?
3. Find passages which you consider satirical. Against whom or what is the satire directed?
4. Discuss the characterization of Laura, Jose, Mrs. Sheridan, and Laurie.
5. What is Laura's problem in this story? Does she solve it? How do you think she will react to everything that ever happens to her?

*Ring Lardner, Michigan-born newspaperman and humorist, said he passed "in" rhetoric and "out of" college in one semester. After working at odd jobs, he covered sports and wrote a column for the Chicago papers. You Know Me, Al (1916), a novel about a conceited bush-leaguer, made Lardner well-known. He followed this up with more satirical stories of ballplayers and "theatrical managers, salesmen, policemen, bridge-players, nurses, prize fighters, suburbanites, tin-can tourists, flappers, and practical jokers" — "Haircut" and "The Golden Honeymoon" are two favorites — all written with his uncanny mastery of dialogue. "The way people spoke," observes a critic, "was to him a complete revelation of what they were; he used conversation . . . to let you into the secrets of the heart."*

Midge Kelly scored his first knockout when he was seventeen. The knockee was his brother Connie, three years his junior and a cripple. The purse was a half dollar given to the younger Kelly by a lady whose electric had just missed bumping his soul from his frail little body.

Connie did not know Midge was in the house, else he never would have risked laying the prize on the arm of the least comfortable chair in the room, the better to observe its shining beauty. As Midge entered from the kitchen, the crippled boy covered the coin with his hand, but the movement lacked the speed requisite to escape his brother's quick eye.

"Watcha got there?" demanded Midge.

"Nothin'," said Connie.

"You're a one legged liar!" said Midge.

He strode over to his brother's chair and grasped the hand that concealed the coin.

"Let loose!" he ordered.

Connie began to cry.

"Let loose and shut up your noise," said the elder, and jerked his brother's hand from the chair arm.

The coin fell onto the bare floor. Midge pounced on it. His weak mouth widened in a triumphant smile.

"Nothin', huh?" he said. "All right, if it's nothin' you don't want it."

"Give that back," sobbed the younger.

"I'll give you a red nose, you little sneak! Where'd you steal it?"

"I didn't steal it. It's mine. A lady give it to me after she pretty near hit me with a car."

"It's a crime she missed you," said Midge.

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Midge started for the front door. The cripple picked up his crutch, rose from his chair with difficulty, and, still sobbing, came toward Midge. The latter heard him and stopped.

"You better stay where you're at," he said.

"I want my money," cried the boy.

"I know what you want," said Midge.

Doubling up the fist that held the half dollar, he landed with all his strength on his brother's mouth. Connie fell to the floor with a thud, the crutch tumbling on top of him. Midge stood beside the prostrate form.

"Is that enough?" he said. "Or do you want this, too?"

And he kicked him in the crippled leg.

"I guess that'll hold you," he said.

There was no response from the boy on the floor. Midge looked at him a moment, then at the coin in his hand, and then went out into the street, whistling.

An hour later, when Mrs. Kelly came home from her day's work at Faulkner's Steam Laundry, she found Connie on the floor, moaning. Dropping on her knees beside him, she called him by name a score of times. Then she got up and, pale as a ghost, dashed from the house. Dr. Ryan left the Kelly abode about dusk and walked toward Halsted Street. Mrs. Dorgan spied him as he passed her gate.

"Who's sick, Doctor?" she called.

"Poor little Connie," he replied. "He had a bad fall."

"How did it happen?"

"I can't say for sure, Margaret, but I'd almost bet he was knocked down."

"Knocked down!" exclaimed Mrs. Dorgan.

"Why, who —?"

"Have you seen the other one lately?"

"Michael? No, not since mornin'. You can't be thinkin' ——"

"I wouldn't put it past him, Margaret," said the doctor gravely. "The lad's mouth is swollen and cut, and his poor, skinny little leg is bruised. He surely didn't do it to himself and I think Helen suspects the other one."

"Lord save us!" said Mrs. Dorgan. "I'll run over and see if I can help."

"That's a good woman," said Doctor Ryan, and went on down the street.

Near midnight, when Midge came home, his mother was sitting at Connie's bedside. She did not look up.

"Well," said Midge, "what's the matter?"

She remained silent. Midge repeated his question.

"Michael, you know what's the matter," she said at length.

"I don't know nothin'," said Midge.

"Don't lie to me, Michael. What did you do to your brother?"

"Nothin'."

"You hit him."

"Well, then, I hit him. What of it? It ain't the first time."

Her lips pressed tightly together, her face like chalk, Ellen Kelly rose from her chair and made straight for him. Midge backed against the door.

"Lay off'n me, Ma. I don't want to fight no woman."

Still she came on breathing heavily.

"Stop where you're at, Ma," he warned.

There was a brief struggle and Midge's mother lay on the floor before him.

"You ain't hurt, Ma. You're lucky I didn't land good. And I told you to lay off'n me."

"God forgive you, Michael!"

Midge found Hap Collins in the showdown game at the Royal.

"Come on out a minute," he said.

Hap followed him out on the walk.

"I'm leavin' town for a w'ile," said Midge.

"What for?"

"Well, we had a little run-in up to the house. The kid stole a half buck off'n me, and when I went after it he cracked me with his crutch. So I nailed him. And the old lady came at me with a chair and I took it off'n her and she fell down."

"How is Connie hurt?"

"Not bad."

"What are you runnin' away for?"

"Who the hell said I was runnin' away? I'm sick and tired o' gettin' picked on; that's all. So I'm leavin' for a w'ile and I want a piece o' money."

"I ain't only got six bits," said Happy.

"You're in bad shape, ain't you? Well, come through with it."

Happy came through.

"You oughtn't to hit the kid," he said.

"I ain't astin' you who can I hit," snarled Midge. "You try to put somethin' over on me and you'll get the same dose. I'm goin' now."

"Go as far as you like," said Happy, but not until he was sure that Kelly was out of hearing.

Early the following morning, Midge boarded a train for Milwaukee. He had no ticket, but no one knew the difference. The conductor remained in the caboose.

On a night six months later, Midge hurried out of the "stage door" of the Star Boxing Club and made for Duane's saloon, two blocks away. In his pocket were twelve dollars, his reward for having battered up one Demon Dempsey through the six rounds of the first preliminary.

It was Midge's first professional engagement in the manly art. Also it was the first time in weeks that he had earned twelve dollars.

On the way to Duane's he had to pass Niemann's. He pulled his cap over his



eyes and increased his pace until he had gone by. Inside Niemann's stood a trusting bartender, who for ten days had staked Midge to drinks and allowed him to ravage the lunch on a promise to come in and settle the moment he was paid for the "prelim."

Midge strode into Duane's and aroused the napping bartender by slapping a silver dollar on the festive board.

"Gimme a shot," said Midge.

The shooting continued until the wind-up at the Star was over and part of the fight crowd joined Midge in front of Duane's bar. A youth in the early twenties, standing next to young Kelly, finally summoned sufficient courage to address him.

"Wasn't you in the first bout?" he ventured.

"Yeh," Midge replied.

"My name's Hersch," said the other.

Midge received the startling information in silence.

"I don't want to butt in," continued Mr. Hersch, "but I'd like to buy you a drink."

"All right," said Midge, "but don't overstrain yourself."

Mr. Hersch laughed uproariously and beckoned to the bartender.

"You certainly gave that wop a trimmin' tonight," said the buyer of the drink, when they had been served. "I thought you'd kill him."

"I would if I hadn't let up," Midge replied. "I'll kill 'em all."

"You got the wallop all right," the other said admiringly.

"Have I got the wallop?" said Midge. "Say, I can kick like a mule. Did you notice them muscles in my shoulders?"

"Notice 'em? I couldn't help from noticin' 'em," said Hersch. "I says to the fella settin' alongside o' me, I says: 'Look at them shoulders! No wonder he can hit,' I says to him."

"Just let me land and it's good-by, baby," said Midge. "I'll kill 'em all."

The oral manslaughter continued until Duane's closed for the night. At parting, Midge and his new friend shook hands and arranged for a meeting the following evening.

For nearly a week the two were together almost constantly. It was Hersch's pleasant rôle to listen to Midge's modest revelations concerning himself, and to buy every time Midge's glass was empty. But there came an evening when Hersch regretfully announced that he must go home to supper.

"I got a date for eight bells," he confided. "I could stick till then, only I must clean up and put on the Sunday clo'es, 'cause she's the prettiest little thing in Milwaukee."

"Can't you fix it for two?" asked Midge.

"I don't know who to get," Hersch replied. "Wait, though. I got a sister and if she ain't busy, it'll be O. K. She's no bum for looks herself."

So it came about that Midge and Emma Hersch and Emma's brother and the prettiest little thing in Milwaukee foregathered at Wall's and danced half the night away. And Midge and Emma danced every dance together, for though every little onestep seemed to induce a new thirst of its own, Lou Hersch stayed too sober to dance with his own sister.

The next day, penniless at last in spite of his phenomenal ability to make someone else settle, Midge Kelly sought out Doc Hammond, matchmaker for the Star, and asked to be booked for the next show.

"I could put you on with Tracy for the next bout," said Doc.

"What's they in it?" asked Midge.

"Twenty if you cop," Doc told him.

"Have a heart," protested Midge. "Didn't I look good the other night?"

"You looked all right. But you aren't Freddie Welsh yet by a consid'able margin."

"I ain't scared of Freddie Welsh or none of 'em," said Midge.

"Well, we don't pay our boxers by the size of their chests," Doc said. "I'm offerin' you this Tracy bout. Take it or leave it."

"All right; I'm on," said Midge, and he passed a pleasant afternoon at Duane's on the strength of his booking.

Young Tracy's manager came to Midge the night before the show.

"How do you feel about this go?" he asked.

"Me?" said Midge, "I feel all right. What do you mean, how do I feel?"

"I mean," said Tracy's manager, "that we're mighty anxious to win, 'cause the boy's got a chanct in Philly if he cops this one."

"What's your proposition?" asked Midge.

"Fifty bucks," said Tracy's manager.

"What do you think I am, a crook? Me lay down for fifty bucks. Not me!"

"Seventy-five, then," said Tracy's manager.

The market closed on eighty and the details were agreed on in short order. And the next night Midge was stopped in the second round by a terrific slap on the forearm.

This time Midge passed up both Niemann's and Duane's, having a sizable account at each place, and sought his refreshment at Stein's farther down the street.

When the profits of his deal with Tracy were gone, he learned, by first-hand information from Doc Hammond and the matchmakers at the other "clubs," that he was no longer desired for even the cheapest of preliminaries. There was no danger of his starving or dying of thirst while Emma and Lou Hersch lived. But he made up his mind, four months after his defeat by Young Tracy, that Milwaukee was not the ideal place for him to live.

"I can lick the best of 'em," he reasoned, "but there ain't no more chanct for me here. I can maybe go east and get on somewheres. And besides ——"

But just after Midge had purchased a ticket to Chicago with the money he had "borrowed" from Emma Hersch "to buy shoes," a heavy hand was laid on his shoulders and he turned to face two strangers.

"Where are you goin', Kelly?" inquired the owner of the heavy hand.

"Nowheres," said Midge. "What the hell do you care?"

The other stranger spoke:

"Kelly, I'm employed by Emma Hersch's mother to see that you do right by her. And we want you to stay here till you've done it."

"You won't get nothin' but the worst of it, monkeying with me," said Midge.

Nevertheless, he did not depart for Chicago that night. Two days later, Emma Hersch became Mrs. Kelly, and the gift of the groom, when once they were alone, was a crushing blow on the bride's pale cheek.

Next morning, Midge left Milwaukee as he had entered it — by fast freight.

"They's no use kiddin' ourself any more," said Tommy Haley. "He might get down to thirty-seven in a pinch, but if he done below that a mouse could stop him. He's a welter; that's what he is and he knows it as well as I do. He's growed like a weed in the last six mont's. I told him, I says, 'If you don't quit growin' they won't be nobody for you to box, only Willard and them.' He says, 'Well, I wouldn't run away from Willard if I weighed twenty pounds more.'"

"He must hate himself," said Tommy's brother.

"I never seen a good one that didn't," said Tommy. "And Midge is a good one; don't make no mistake about that. I wisht we could of got Welsh before the kid growed so big. But it's too late now. I won't make no holler, though, if we can match him up with the Dutchman."

"Who do you mean?"

"Young Goetz, the welter champ. We mightn't not get so much dough for the bout itself, but it'd roll in afterward. What a drawin' card we'd be, 'cause the people pays their money to see the fella with the wallop, and that's Midge. And we'd keep the title just as long as Midge could make the weight."

"Can't you land no match with Goetz?"

"Sure, 'cause he needs the money. But I've went careful with the kid so far and look at the results I got! So what's the use of takin' a chanct? The kid's comin' every minute and Goetz is goin' back faster'n big Johnson did. I think we could lick him now; I'd bet my life on it. But six mont's from now they won't be no risk. He'll of licked hisself before that time. Then all as we'll have to do is sign up with him and wait for the referee to stop it. But Midge is so crazy to get at him now that I can't hardly hold him back."

The brothers Haley were lunching in a Boston hotel. Dan had come down from Holyoke to visit with Tommy and to watch the latter's protégé go twelve rounds, or less, with Bud Cross. The bout promised little in the way of a contest, for Midge had twice stopped the Baltimore youth and Bud's reputation for

gameness was all that had earned him the date. The fans were willing to pay the price to see Midge's hay-making left, but they wanted to see it used on an opponent who would not jump out of the ring the first time he felt its crushing force. Bud Cross was such an opponent, and his willingness to stop boxing-gloves with his eyes, ears, nose and throat had long enabled him to escape the horrors of honest labor. A game boy was Bud, and he showed it in his battered, swollen, discolored face.

"I should think," said Dan Haley, "that the kid'd do whatever you tell him after all you done for him."

"Well," said Tommy, "he's took my dope pretty straight so far, but he's so sure of hisself that he can't see no reason for waitin'. He'll do what I say, though; he'd be a sucker not to."

"You got a contrac' with him?"

"No, I don't need no contrac'. He knows it was me that drug him out o' the gutter and he ain't goin' to turn me down now, when he's got the dough and bound to get more. Where'd he of been at if I hadn't listened to him when he first come to me? That's pretty near two years ago now, but it seems like last week. I was settin' in the s'loon acrost from the Pleasant Club in Philly, waitin' for McCann to count the dough and come over, when this little bum blowed in and tried to stand the house off for a drink. They told him nothin' doin' and to beat it out o' there, and then he seen me and come over to where I was settin' and ast me wasn't I a boxin' man and I told him who I was. Then he ast me for money to buy a shot and I told him to set down and I'd buy it for him.

"Then we got talkin' things over and he told me his name and told me about fightn' a couple o' prelims out to Milwaukee. So I says, 'Well, boy, I don't know how good or how rotten you are, but you won't never get nowheres trainin' on that stuff.' So he says he'd cut it out if he could get on in a bout and I says I would give him a chanct if he played square with me and didn't touch no more to drink. So we shook hands and I took him up to the hotel with me and give him a bath and the next day I bought him some clo'es. And I staked him to eats and sleeps for over six weeks. He had a hard time breakin' away from the polish, but finally I thought he was fit and I give him his chanct. He went on with Smiley Sayer and stopped him so quick that Smiley thought sure he was poisoned.

"Well, you know what he's did since. The only beatin' in his record was by Tracy in Milwaukee before I got hold of him, and he's licked Tracy three times in the last year.

"I've gave him all the best of it in a money way and he's got seven thousand bucks in cold storage. How's that for a kid that was in the gutter two years ago? And he'd have still more yet if he wasn't so nuts over clo'es and got to stop at the good hotels and so forth."

"Where's his home at?"

"Well, he ain't really got no home. He came from Chicago and his mother canned him out o' the house for bein' no good. She give him a raw deal, I guess, and he says he won't have nothin' to do with her unlest she comes to him first. She's got a pile of money, he says, so he ain't worryin' about her."

The gentleman under discussion entered the café and swaggered to Tommy's table, while the whole room turned to look.

Midge was the picture of health despite a slightly colored eye and an ear that seemed to have no opening. But perhaps it was not his healthiness that drew all eyes. His diamond horse-shoe tie pin, his purple cross-striped shirt, his orange shoes and his light blue suit fairly screamed for attention.

"Where you been?" he asked Tommy. "I been lookin' all over for you."

"Set down," said his manager.

"No time," said Midge. "I'm goin' down to the w'arf and see 'em unload the fish."

"Shake hands with my brother Dan," said Tommy.

Midge shook with the Holyoke Haley.

"If you're Tommy's brother, you're O. K. with me," said Midge, and the brothers beamed with pleasure.

Dan moistened his lips and murmured an embarrassed reply, but it was lost on the young gladiator.

"Leave me take twenty," Midge was saying. "I prob'ly won't need it, but I don't like to be caught short."

Tommy parted with a twenty dollar bill and recorded the transaction in a small black book the insurance company had given him for Christmas.

"But," he said, "it won't cost you no twenty to look at them fish. Want me to go along?"

"No," said Midge hastily. "You and your brother here prob'ly got a lot to say to each other."

"Well," said Tommy, "don't take no bad money and don't get lost. And you better be back at four o'clock and lay down a w'ile."

"I don't need no rest to beat this guy," said Midge. "He'll do enough layin' down for the both of us."

And laughing even more than the jest called for, he strode out through the fire of admiring and startled glances.

The corner of Boylston and Tremont was the nearest Midge got to the wharf, but the lady awaiting him was doubtless a more dazzling sight than the catch of the luckiest Massachusetts fisherman. She could talk, too — probably better than the fish.

"O you Kid!" she said, flashing a few silver teeth among the gold. "O you fighting man!"

Midge smiled up at her.

"We'll go somewheres and get a drink," he said. "One won't hurt."

In New Orleans, five months after he had rearranged the map of Bud Cross for the third time, Midge finished training for his championship bout with the Dutchman.

Back in his hotel after the final workout, Midge stopped to chat with some of the boys from up north, who had made the long trip to see a champion dethroned, for the result of this bout was so nearly a foregone conclusion that even the experts had guessed it.

Tommy Haley secured the key and the mail and ascended to the Kelly suite. He was bathing when Midge came in, half an hour later.

"Any mail?" asked Midge.

"There on the bed," replied Tommy from the tub.

Midge picked up the stack of letters and postcards and glanced them over. From the pile he sorted out three letters and laid them on the table. The rest he tossed into the waste-basket. Then he picked up the three and sat for a few moments holding them, while his eyes gazed off into space. At length he looked again at the three unopened letters in his hand; then he put one in his pocket and tossed the other two at the basket. They missed their target and fell on the floor.

"Hell!" said Midge, and stooping over picked them up.

He opened one postmarked Milwaukee and read:

Dear Husband:

I have wrote to you so manny times and got no anser and I dont know if you ever got them, so I am writeing again in the hopes you will get this letter and anser. I dont like to bother you with my trubles and I would not only for the baby and I am not asking you should write to me but only send a little money and I am not asking for myself but the baby has not been well a day sence last Aug. and the dr. told me she cant live much longer unless I give her better food and thats impossible the way things are. Lou has not been working for a year and what I make dont hardley pay for the rent. I am not asking for you to give me any money, but only you should send what I loaned when convenient and I think it amts. to about \$36.00. Please try and send that amt. and it will help me, but if you cant send the whole amt. try and send me something.

Your wife,

Emma.

Midge tore the letter into a hundred pieces and scattered them over the floor.

"Money, money, money!" he said. "They must think I'm made o' money. I s'pose the old woman's after it too."

He opened his mother's letter:

dear Michael Connie wonted me to rite and say you must beet the dutchman and he is sur you will and wonted me to say we wont you to rite and tell us about

it, but I gess you havent no time to rite or we herd from you long beffore this but I wish you would rite jest a line or 2 boy becaus it wuld be better for Connie then a barl of medisin. It wuld help me to keep things going if you send me money now and then when you can spair it but if you cant send no money try and fine time to rite a letter onley a few lines and it will please Connie. jest think boy he hasent got out of bed in over 3 yrs. Connie says good luck.

Your Mother,  
Ellen F. Kelly.

"I thought so," said Midge. "They're all alike."

The third letter was from New York. It read:

Hon: — This is the last letter you will get from me before your champ, but I will send you a telegram Saturday, but I can't say as much in a telegram as in a letter and I am writeing this to let you know I am thinking of you and praying for good luck.

Lick him good hon and don't wait no longer than you have to and don't forget to wire me as soon as its over. Give him that little old left of yours on the nose hon and don't be afraid of spoiling his good looks because he couldn't be no homlier than he is. But don't let him spoil my baby's pretty face. You won't will you hon.

Well hon I would give anything to be there and see it, but I guess you love Haley better than me or you wouldn't let him keep me away. But when your champ hon we can do as we please and tell Haley to go to the devil.

Well hon I will send you a telegram Saturday and I almost forgot to tell you I will need some more money, a couple hundred say and you will have to wire it to me as soon as you get this. You will won't you hon.

I will send you a telegram Saturday and remember hon I am pulling for you. Well good-by sweetheart and good luck.

Grace.

"They're all alike," said Midge. "Money, money, money."

Tommy Haley, shining from his ablutions, came in from the adjoining room.

"Thought you'd be layin' down," he said.

"I'm goin' to," said Midge, unbuttoning his orange shoes.

"I'll call you at six and you can eat up here without no bugs to pester you. I got to go down and give them birds their tickets."

"Did you hear from Goldberg?" asked Midge.

"Didn't I tell you? Sure; fifteen weeks at five hundred, if we win. And we can get a guarantee o' twelve thousand, with privileges either in New York or Milwaukee."

"Who with?"

"Anybody that'll stand up in front of you. You don't care who it is, do you?"

"Not me. I'll make 'em all look like a monkey."

"Well you better lay down aw'ile."

"Oh, say, wire two hundred to Grace for me, will you? Right away; the New York address."

"Two hundred! You just sent her three hundred last Sunday."

"Well, what the hell do you care?"

"All right, all right. Don't get sore about it. Anything else?"

"That's all," said Midge, and dropped onto the bed.

"And I want the deed done before I come back," said Grace as she rose from the table. "You won't fall down on me, will you, hon?"

"Leave it to me," said Midge. "And don't spend no more than you have to."

Grace smiled a farewell and left the café. Midge continued to sip his coffee and read his paper.

They were in Chicago and they were in the middle of Midge's first week in vaudeville. He had come straight north to reap the rewards of his glorious victory over the broken down Dutchman. A fortnight had been spent in learning his act, which consisted of a gymnastic exhibition and a ten minutes' monologue on the various excellences of Midge Kelly. And now he was twice daily turning 'em away from the Madison Theater.

His breakfast over and his paper read, Midge sauntered into the lobby and asked for his key. He then beckoned to a bell-boy, who had been hoping for that very honor.

"Find Haley, Tommy Haley," said Midge. "Tell him to come up to my room."

"Yes, sir, Mr. Kelly," said the boy, and proceeded to break all his former records for diligence.

Midge was looking out of his seventh-story window when Tommy answered the summons.

"What'll it be?" inquired his manager.

There was a pause before Midge replied.

"Haley," he said, "twenty-five per cent's a whole lot o' money."

"I guess I got it comin', ain't I?" said Tommy.

"I don't see how you figger it. I don't see where you're worth it to me."

"Well," said Tommy, "I didn't expect nothin' like this. I thought you was satisfied with the bargain. I don't want to beat nobody out o' nothin', but I don't see where you could have got anybody else that would of did all I done for you."

"Sure, that's all right," said the champion. "You done a lot for me in Philly. And you got good money for it, didn't you?"

"I ain't makin' no holler. Still and all, the big money's still ahead of us yet."



And if it hadn't of been for me, you wouldn't of never got within grabbin' distance."

"Oh, I guess I could of went along all right," said Midge. "Who was it that hung that left on the Dutchman's jaw, me or you?"

"Yes, but you wouldn't been in the ring with the Dutchman if it wasn't for how I handled you."

"Well, this won't get us nowheres. The idear is that you ain't worth no twenty-five per cent now and it don't make no diff'rence what come off a year or two ago."

"Don't it?" said Tommy. "I'd say it made a whole lot of difference."

"Well, I say it don't and I guess that settles it."

"Look here, Midge," Tommy said, "I thought I was fair with you, but if you don't think so, I'm willin' to hear what you think is fair. I don't want nobody callin' me a Sherlock. Let's go down to business and sign up a contrac'. What's your figger?"

"I ain't namin' no figger," Midge replied. "I'm sayin' that twenty-five's too much. Now what are you willin' to take?"

"How about twenty?"

"Twenty's too much," said Kelly.

"What ain't too much?" asked Tommy.

"Well, Haley, I might as well give it to you straight. They ain't nothin' that ain't too much."

"You mean you don't want me at no figger?"

"That's the idear."

There was a minute's silence. Then Tommy Haley walked toward the door.

"Midge," he said, in a choking voice, "you're makin' a big mistake, boy. You can't throw down your best friends and get away with it. That damn woman will ruin you."

Midge sprang from his seat.

"You shut your mouth!" he stormed. "Get out o' here before they have to carry you out. You been spongin' off o' me long enough. Say one more word about the girl or about anything else and you'll get what the Dutchman got. Now get out!"

And Tommy Haley, having a very vivid memory of the Dutchman's face as he fell, got out.

Grace came in later, dropped her numerous bundles on the lounge and perched herself on the arm of Midge's chair.

"Well?" she said.

"Well," said Midge, "I got rid of him."

"Good boy!" said Grace. "And now I think you might give me that twenty-five per cent."

"Besides the seventy-five you're already gettin'?" said Midge.

"Don't be no grouch, hon. You don't look pretty when you're grouchy."

"It ain't my business to look pretty," Midge replied.

"Wait till you see how I look with the stuff I bought this mornin'!"

Midge glanced at the bundles on the lounge.

"There's Haley's twenty-five per cent," he said, "and then some."

The champion did not remain long without a manager. Haley's successor was none other than Jerome Harris, who saw in Midge a better meal ticket than his popular-priced musical show had been.

The contract, giving Mr. Harris twenty-five per cent of Midge's earnings, was signed in Detroit the week after Tommy Haley had heard his dismissal read. It had taken Midge just six days to learn that a popular actor cannot get on without the ministrations of a man who thinks, talks and means business. At first Grace objected to the new member of the firm, but when Mr. Harris had demanded and secured from the vaudeville people a one-hundred dollar increase in Midge's weekly stipend, she was convinced that the champion had acted for the best.

"You and my missus will have some great old times," Harris told Grace. "I'd of wired her to join us here, only I seen the Kid's bookin' takes us to Milwaukee next week, and that's where she is."

But when they were introduced in the Milwaukee hotel, Grace admitted to herself that her feeling for Mrs. Harris could hardly be called love at first sight. Midge, on the contrary, gave his new manager's wife the many times over and seemed loath to end the feast of his eyes.

"Some doll," he said to Grace when they were alone.

"Doll is right," the lady replied, "and sawdust where her brains ought to be."

"I'm li'ble to steal that baby," said Midge, and he smiled as he noted the effect of his words on his audience's face.

On Tuesday of the Milwaukee week the champion successfully defended his title in a bout that the newspapers never reported. Midge was alone in his room that morning when a visitor entered without knocking. The visitor was Lou Hersch.

Midge turned white at sight of him.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"I guess you know," said Lou Hersch. "Your wife's starvin' to death and your baby's starvin' to death and I'm starvin' to death. And you're dirty with money."

"Listen," said Midge, "if it wasn't for you, I wouldn't never saw your sister. And, if you ain't man enough to hold a job, what's that to me? The best thing you can do is keep away from me."

"You give me a piece o' money and I'll go."

Midge's reply to the ultimatum was a straight right to his brother-in-law's narrow chest.

"Take that home to your sister."

And after Lou Hersch had picked himself up and slunk away, Midge thought: "It's lucky I didn't give him my left or I'd of croaked him. And if I'd hit him in the stomach, I'd of broke his spine."

There was a party after each evening performance during the Milwaukee engagement. The wine flowed freely and Midge had more of it than Tommy Haley ever would have permitted him. Mr. Harris offered no objection, which was possibly just as well for his own physical comfort.

In the dancing between drinks, Midge had his new manager's wife for a partner as often as Grace. The latter's face as she floundered round in the arms of the portly Harris, belied her frequent protestations that she was having the time of her life.

Several times that week, Midge thought Grace was on the point of starting the quarrel he hoped to have. But it was not until Friday night that she accommodated. He and Mrs. Harris had disappeared after the matinee and when Grace saw him again at the close of the night show, she came to the point at once.

"What are you tryin' to pull off?" she demanded.

"It's none o' your business, is it?" said Midge.

"You bet it's my business; mine and Harris's. You cut it short or you'll find out."

"Listen," said Midge, "have you got a mortgage on me or somethin'? You talk like we was married."

"We're goin' to be, too. And to-morrow's as good a time as any."

"Just about," Midge said. "You got as much chanct o' marryin' me to-morrow as the next day or next year and that ain't no chanct at all."

"We'll find out," said Grace.

"You're the one that's got somethin' to find out."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean I'm married already."

"You lie!"

"You think so, do you? Well, s'pose you go to this here address and get acquainted with my missus."

Midge scrawled a number on a piece of paper and handed it to her. She stared at it unseeingly.

"Well," said Midge, "I ain't kiddin' you. You go there and ask for Mrs. Michael Kelly, and if you don't find her, I'll marry you to-morrow before breakfast."

Still Grace stared at the scrap of paper. To Midge it seemed an age before she spoke again.

"You lied to me all this w'ile."

"You never ast me was I married. What's more, what the hell diff'rence did it make to you? You got a split, didn't you? Better'n fifty-fifty."

He started away.

"Where you goin'?"

"I'm goin' to meet Harris and his wife."

"I'm goin' with you. You're not goin' to shake me now."

"Yes I am, too," said Midge quietly. "When I leave town to-morrow night, you're going to stay here. And if I see where you're goin' to make a fuss, I'll put you in a hospital where they'll keep you quiet. You can get your stuff to-morrow mornin' and I'll slip you a hundred bucks. And then I don't want to see no more o' you. And don't try and tag along now or I'll have to add another K. O. to the old record."

When Grace returned to the hotel that night, she discovered that Midge and the Harrises had moved to another. And when Midge left town the following night, he was again without a manager, and Mr. Harris was without a wife.

Three days prior to Midge Kelly's ten-round bout with Young Milton in New York City, the sporting editor of *The News* assigned Joe Morgan to write two or three thousand words about the champion to run with a picture lay-out for Sunday.

Joe Morgan dropped in at Midge's training quarters Friday afternoon. Midge, he learned, was doing road work, but Midge's manager, Wallie Adams, stood ready and willing to supply reams of dope about the greatest fighter of the age.

"Let's hear what you've got," said Joe, "and then I'll try to fix up something."

So Wallie stepped on the accelerator of his imagination and shot away.

"Just a kid; that's all he is; a regular boy. Get what I mean? Don't know the meanin' o' bad habits. Never tasted liquor in his life and would prob'bly get sick if he smelled it. Clean livin' put him up where he's at. Get what I mean? And modest and unassumin' as a school girl. He's so quiet you wouldn't never know he was round. And he'd go to jail before he'd talk about himself.

"No job at all to get him in shape, 'cause he's always that way. The only trouble we have with him is gettin' him to light into these poor bums they match him up with. He's scared he'll hurt somebody. Get what I mean? He's tickled to death over this match with Milton, 'cause everybody says Milton can stand the gaff. Midge'll maybe be able to cut loose a little this time. But the last two bouts he had, the guys hadn't no business in the ring with him, and he was holdin' back all the w'ile for the fear he'd kill somebody. Get what I mean?"

"Is he married?" inquired Joe.

"Say, you'd think he was married to hear him rave about them kiddies he's got. His fam'ly's up in Canada to their summer home and Midge is wild to get

up there with 'em. He thinks more o' that wife and them kiddies than all the money in the world. Get what I mean?"

"How many children has he?"

"I don't know, four or five, I guess. All boys and every one of 'em a dead ringer for their dad."

"Is his father living?"

"No, the old man died when he was a kid. But he's got a grand old mother and a kid brother out in Chi. They're the first ones he thinks about after a match, them and his wife and kiddies. And he don't forget to send the old woman a thousand bucks after every bout. He's goin' to buy her a new home as soon as they pay him off for this match."

"How about his brother? Is he going to tackle the game?"

"Sure, and Midge says he'll be a champion before he's twenty years old. They're a fightin' fam'ly and all of 'em honest and straight as a die. Get what I mean? A fella that I can't tell you his name come to Midge in Milwaukee onct and wanted him to throw a fight and Midge give him such a trimmin' in the street that he couldn't go on that night. That's the kind he is. Get what I mean?"

Joe Morgan hung around the camp until Midge and his trainers returned.

"One o' the boys from *The News*," said Wallie by way of introduction. "I been givin' him your fam'ly hist'ry."

"Did he give you good dope?" he inquired.

"He's some historian," said Joe.

"Don't call me no names," said Wallie smiling. "Call us up if they's anything more you want. And keep your eyes on us Monday night. Get what I mean?"

The story in Sunday's *News* was read by thousands of lovers of the manly art. It was well written and full of human interest. Its slight inaccuracies went unchallenged, though three readers, besides Wallie Adams and Midge Kelly, saw and recognized them. The three were Grace, Tommy Haley and Jerome Harris and the comments they made were not for publication.

Neither the Mrs. Kelly in Chicago nor the Mrs. Kelly in Milwaukee knew that there was such a paper as the *New York News*. And even if they had known of it and that it contained two columns of reading matter about Midge, neither mother nor wife could have bought it. For *The News* on Sunday is a nickel a copy.

Joe Morgan could have written more accurately, no doubt, if instead of Wallie Adams, he had interviewed Ellen Kelly and Connie Kelly and Emma Kelly and Lou Hersch and Grace and Jerome Harris and Tommy Haley and Hap Collins and two or three Milwaukee bartenders.

But a story built on their evidence would never have passed the sporting editor.

"Suppose you can prove it," that gentleman would have said. "It wouldn't

get us anything but abuse to print it. The people don't want to see him knocked. He's champion."

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is the point of this story? Where is it made? How much is told in dialogue?
2. In what two ways does Lardner bring out Midge Kelly's character? In which sentence is it first revealed?
3. Discuss the strong and weak points of Lardner's characterization. What purpose do the minor characters serve?
4. How big is Midge? Why did he leave Milwaukee the first time? the second time?
5. Compare this with other plots in organization and scope. Which is emphasized — character, theme, or plot?

Ernest Hemingway

## The Killers

*Ernest Hemingway, best-known author of the "Lost Generation" group after World War I, has been considered the greatest American short story writer of this century. He fought with the Italian army during the war, and was severely wounded; afterwards, he was a foreign correspondent and expatriate in Paris. His *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) established his reputation as a novelist. During the 1930's he covered the Spanish Civil War and wrote *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1939). His realism and clipped dialogue have had great influence on other writers. In his stories, especially, it is true that "it is in the realistic hint rather than the realistic statement that his power lies . . . Hemingway's is the art of the reporter carried to the highest degree."*

The door of Henry's lunchroom opened and two men came in. They sat down at the counter.

"What's yours?" George asked them.

"I don't know," one of the men said. "What do you want to eat, Al?"

"I don't know," said Al. "I don't know what I want to eat."

Outside it was getting dark. The street light came on outside the window. The

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two men at the counter read the menu. From the other end of the counter Nick Adams watched them. He had been talking to George when they came in.

"I'll have a roast pork tenderloin with apple sauce and mashed potatoes," the first man said.

"It isn't ready yet."

"What the hell do you put it on the card for?"

"That's the dinner," George explained. "You can get that at six o'clock."

George looked at the clock on the wall behind the counter.

"It's five o'clock."

"The clock says twenty minutes past five," the second man said.

"It's twenty minutes fast."

"Oh, to hell with the clock," the first man said. "What have you got to eat?"

"I can give you any kind of sandwiches," George said. "You can have ham and eggs, bacon and eggs, liver and bacon, or a steak."

"Give me chicken croquettes with green peas and cream sauce and mashed potatoes."

"That's the dinner."

"Everything we want's the dinner, eh? That's the way you work it."

"I can give you ham and eggs, bacon and eggs, liver —"

"I'll take ham and eggs," the man called Al said. He wore a derby hat and a black overcoat buttoned across the chest. His face was small and white and he had tight lips. He wore a silk muffler and gloves.

"Give me bacon and eggs," said the other man. He was about the same size as Al. Their faces were different, but they were dressed like twins. Both wore overcoats too tight for them. They sat leaning forward, their elbows on the counter.

"Got anything to drink?" Al asked.

"Silver beer, bevo, ginger ale," George said.

"I mean you got anything to *drink*?"

"Just those I said."

"This is a hot town," said the other. "What do they call it?"

"Summit."

"Ever hear of it?" Al asked his friend.

"No," said the friend.

"What do you do here nights?" Al asked.

"They eat the dinner," his friend said. "They all come here and eat the big dinner."

"That's right," George said.

"So you think that's right?" Al asked George.

"Sure."

"You're a pretty bright boy, aren't you?"

"Sure," said George.

"Well, you're not," said the other little man. "Is he, Al?"

"He's dumb," said Al. He turned to Nick. "What's your name?"

"Adams."

"Another bright boy," Al said. "Ain't he a bright boy, Max?"

"The town's full of bright boys," Max said.

George put the two platters, one of ham and eggs, the other of bacon and eggs, on the counter. He set down two side dishes of fried potatoes and closed the wicket into the kitchen.

"Which is yours?" he asked Al.

"Don't you remember?"

"Ham and eggs."

"Just a bright boy," Max said. He leaned forward and took the ham and eggs. Both men ate with their gloves on. George watched them eat.

"What are *you* looking at?" Max looked at George.

"Nothing."

"The hell you were. You were looking at me."

"Maybe the boy meant it for a joke, Max," Al said.

George laughed.

"*You* don't have to laugh," Max said to him. "*You* don't have to laugh at all, see?"

"All right," said George.

"So he thinks it's all right." Max turned to Al. "He thinks it's all right. That's a good one."

"Oh, he's a thinker," Al said. They went on eating.

"What's the bright boy's name down the counter?" Al asked Max.

"Hey, bright boy," Max said to Nick. "You go around on the other side of the counter with your boy friend."

"What's the idea?" Nick asked.

"There isn't any idea."

"You better go around, bright boy," Al said. Nick went around behind the counter.

"What's the idea?" George asked.

"None of your damn business," Al said. "Who's out in the kitchen?"

"The nigger."

"What do you mean the nigger?"

"The nigger that cooks."

"Tell him to come in."

"What's the idea?"

"Tell him to come in."

"Where do you think you are?"

"We know damn well where we are," the man called Max said. "Do we look silly?"



"You talk silly," Al said to him. "What the hell do you argue with this kid for? Listen," he said to George, "tell the nigger to come out here."

"What are you going to do to him?"

"Nothing. Use your head, bright boy. What would we do to a nigger?"

George opened the slit that opened back into the kitchen. "Sam," he called. "Come in here a minute."

The door to the kitchen opened and the nigger came in. "What was it?" he asked. The two men at the counter took a look at him.

"All right, nigger. You stand right there," Al said.

Sam, the nigger, standing in his apron, looked at the two men sitting at the counter. "Yes, sir," he said. Al got down from his stool.

"I'm going back to the kitchen with the nigger and bright boy," he said. "Go on back to the kitchen, nigger. You go with him, bright boy." The little man walked after Nick and Sam, the cook, back into the kitchen. The door shut after them. The man called Max sat at the counter opposite George. He didn't look at George but looked in the mirror that ran along back of the counter. Henry's had been made over from a saloon into a lunch counter.

"Well, bright boy," Max said, looking into the mirror, "why don't you say something?"

"What's it all about?"

"Hey, Al," Max called, "bright boy wants to know what it's all about."

"Why don't you tell him?" Al's voice came from the kitchen.

"What do you think it's all about?"

"I don't know."

"What do you think?"

Max looked into the mirror all the time he was talking.

"I wouldn't say."

"Hey, Al, bright boy says he wouldn't say what he thinks it's all about."

"I can hear you, all right," Al said from the kitchen. He had propped open the slit that dishes passed through into the kitchen with a catsup bottle. "Listen, bright boy," he said from the kitchen to George. "Stand a little further along the bar. You move a little to the left, Max." He was like a photographer arranging for a group picture.

"Talk to me, bright boy," Max said. "What do you think's going to happen?"

George did not say anything.

"I'll tell you," Max said. "We're going to kill a Swede. Do you know a big Swede named Ole Andreson?"

"Yes."

"He comes here to eat every night, don't he?"

"Sometimes he comes here."

"He comes here at six o'clock, don't he?"

"If he comes."

"We know all that, bright boy," Max said. "Talk about something else. Ever go to the movies?"

"Once in a while."

"You ought to go to the movies more. The movies are fine for a bright boy like you."

"What are you going to kill Ole Andreson for? What did he ever do to you?"

"He never had a chance to do anything to us. He never even seen us."

"And he's only going to see us once," Al said from the kitchen.

"What are you going to kill him for, then?" George asked.

"We're killing him for a friend. Just to oblige a friend, bright boy."

"Shut up," said Al from the kitchen. "You talk too goddamn much."

"Well, I got to keep bright boy amused. Don't I, bright boy?"

"You talk too damn much," Al said. "The nigger and my bright boy are amused by themselves. I got them tied up like a couple of girl friends in a convent."

"I suppose you were in a convent."

"You never know."

"You were in a kosher convent. That's where you were."

George looked up at the clock.

"If anybody comes in you tell them the cook is off, and if they keep after it, you tell them you'll go back and cook yourself. Do you get that, bright boy?"

"All right," George said. "What you going to do with us afterward?"

"That'll depend," Max said. "That's one of those things you never know at the time."

George looked up at the clock. It was a quarter past six. The door from the street opened. A street-car motorman came in.

"Hello, George," he said. "Can I get supper?"

"Sam's gone out," George said. "He'll be back in about half an hour."

"I'd better go up the street," the motorman said. George looked at the clock. It was twenty minutes past six.

"That was nice, bright boy," Max said. "You're a regular little gentleman."

"He knew I'd blow his head off," Al said from the kitchen.

"No," said Max. "It ain't that. Bright boy is nice. He's a nice boy. I like him."

At six-fifty-five George said: "He's not coming."

Two other people had been in the lunchroom. Once George had gone out to the kitchen and made a ham-and-egg sandwich "to go" that a man wanted to take with him. Inside the kitchen he saw Al, his derby hat tipped back, sitting on a stool beside the wicket with the muzzle of a sawed-off shotgun resting on the ledge. Nick and the cook were back to back in the corner, a towel tied in each of their mouths. George had cooked the sandwich, wrapped it up in oiled paper, put it in a bag, brought it in, and the man had paid for it and gone out.

"Bright boy can do everything," Max said. "He can cook and everything. You'd make some girl a nice wife, bright boy."

"Yes?" George said. "Your friend, Ole Andreson, isn't going to come."

"We'll give him ten minutes," Max said.

Max watched the mirror and the clock. The hands of the clock marked seven o'clock, and then five minutes past seven.

"Come on, Al," said Max. "We better go. He's not coming."

"Better give him five minutes," Al said from the kitchen.

In the five minutes a man came in, and George explained that the cook was sick.

"Why the hell don't you get another cook?" the man asked. "Aren't you running a lunch counter?" He went out.

"Come on, Al," Max said.

"What about the two bright boys and the nigger?"

"They're all right."

"You think so?"

"Sure. We're through with it."

"I don't like it," said Al. "It's sloppy. You talk too much."

"Oh, what the hell," said Max. "We got to keep amused, haven't we?"

"You talk too much, all the same," Al said. He came out from the kitchen. The cut-off barrels of the shotgun made a slight bulge under the waist of his too tight-fitting overcoat. He straightened his coat with his gloved hands.

"So long, bright boy," he said to George. "You got a lot of luck."

"That's the truth," Max said. "You ought to play the races, bright boy."

The two of them went out the door. George watched them, through the window, pass under the arc light and cross the street. In their tight overcoats and derby hats they looked like a vaudeville team. George went back through the swinging door into the kitchen and untied Nick and the cook.

"I don't want any more of that," said Sam, the cook. "I don't want any more of that."

Nick stood up. He had never had a towel in his mouth before.

"Say," he said. "What the hell?" He was trying to swagger it off.

"They were going to kill Ole Andreson," George said. "They were going to shoot him when he came in to eat."

"Ole Andreson?"

"Sure."

The cook felt the corners of his mouth with his thumbs.

"They all gone?" he asked.

"Yeah," said George. "They're gone now."

"I don't like it," said the cook. "I don't like any of it at all."

"Listen," George said to Nick. "You better go see Ole Andreson."

"All right."

"You better not have anything to do with it at all," Sam, the cook, said. "You better stay way out of it."

"Don't go if you don't want to," George said.

"Mixing up in this ain't going to get you anywhere," the cook said. "You stay out of it."

"I'll go see him," Nick said to George. "Where does he live?"

The cook turned away.

"Little boys always know what they want to do," he said.

"He lives up at Hirsch's rooming house," George said to Nick.

"I'll go up there."

Outside the arc light shone through the bare branches of a tree. Nick walked up the street beside the car tracks and turned at the next arc light down a side street. Three houses up the street was Hirsch's rooming house. Nick walked up the two steps and pushed the bell. A woman came to the door.

"Is Ole Andreson here?"

"Do you want to see him?"

"Yes, if he's in."

Nick followed the woman up a flight of stairs and back to the end of a corridor. She knocked on the door.

"Who is it?"

"It's somebody to see you, Mr. Andreson," the woman said.

"It's Nick Adams."

"Come in."

Nick opened the door and went into the room. Ole Andreson was lying on the bed with all his clothes on. He had been a heavyweight prizefighter and he was too long for the bed. He lay with his head on two pillows. He did not look at Nick.

"What was it?" he asked.

"I was up at Henry's," Nick said, "and two fellows came in and tied up me and the cook, and they said they were going to kill you."

It sounded silly when he said it. Ole Andreson said nothing.

"They put us out in the kitchen," Nick went on. "They were going to shoot you when you came in to supper."

Ole Andreson looked at the wall and did not say anything.

"George thought I better come and tell you about it."

"There isn't anything I can do about it," Ole Andreson said.

"I'll tell you what they were like."

"I don't want to know what they were like," Ole Andreson said. He looked at the wall. "Thanks for coming to tell me about it."

"That's all right."

Nick looked at the big man lying on the bed.

"Don't you want me to go and see the police?"

"No," Ole Andreson said. "That wouldn't do any good."

"Isn't there something I could do?"

"No. There ain't anything to do."

"Maybe it was just a bluff."

"No. It ain't just a bluff."

Ole Andreson rolled over toward the wall.

"The only thing is," he said, talking toward the wall, "I just can't make up my mind to go out. I been in here all day."

"Couldn't you get out of town?"

"No," Ole Andreson said. "I'm through with all that running around."

He looked at the wall.

"There ain't anything to do now."

"Couldn't you fix it up some way?"

"No. I got in wrong." He talked in the same flat voice. "There ain't anything to do. After a while I'll make up my mind to go out."

"I better go back and see George," Nick said.

"So long," said Ole Andreson. He did not look toward Nick. "Thanks for coming around."

Nick went out. As he shut the door he saw Ole Andreson with all his clothes on, lying on the bed looking at the wall.

"He's been in his room all day," the landlady said downstairs. "I guess he don't feel well. I said to him: 'Mr. Andreson, you ought to go out and take a walk on a nice fall day like this,' but he didn't feel like it."

"He doesn't want to go out."

"I'm sorry he don't feel well," the woman said. "He's an awfully nice man. He was in the ring, you know."

"I know it."

"You'd never know it except from the way his face is," the woman said. They stood talking just inside the street door. "He's just as gentle."

"Well, good-night, Mrs. Hirsch," Nick said.

"I'm not Mrs. Hirsch," the woman said. "She owns the place. I just look after it for her. I'm Mrs. Bell."

"Well, good-night, Mrs. Bell," Nick said.

"Good-night," the woman said.

Nick walked up the dark street to the corner under the arc light, and then along the car tracks to Henry's eating house. George was inside, back of the counter.

"Did you see Ole?"

"Yes," said Nick. "He's in his room and he won't go out."

The cook opened the door from the kitchen when he heard Nick's voice.

"I don't even listen to it," he said and shut the door.

"Did you tell him about it?" George asked.

"Sure. I told him but he knows what it's all about."

"What's he going to do?"

"Nothing."

"They'll kill him."

"I guess they will."

"He must have got mixed up in something in Chicago."

"I guess so," said Nick.

"It's a hell of a thing."

"It's an awful thing," Nick said.

They did not say anything. George reached down for a towel and wiped the counter.

"I wonder what he did?" Nick said.

"Double-crossed somebody. That's what they kill them for."

"I'm going to get out of this town," Nick said.

"Yes," said George. "That's a good thing to do."

"I can't stand to think about him waiting in the room and knowing he's going to get it. It's too damned awful."

"Well," said George, "you better not think about it."

#### QUESTIONS

1. From whose point of view is this story told? Who do you think is the chief character?
2. Are the gangsters differentiated in appearance? in character?
3. Is Ole Andreson's inaction made plausible?
4. Find examples of restraint or "underwriting." Which character's speeches seem more natural and unrestrained?
5. Has the story a theme, or is it just a slice of life without particular significance?

*F. Scott Fitzgerald is famous for his interpretation of the "Jazz Age," which he said was "an age of miracles . . . an age of art . . . an age of excess, and . . . an age of satire." After attending Princeton and serving in World War I, he won popularity overnight with his first novel, about "flaming youth," This Side of Paradise (1920). Other novels, including The Great Gatsby (1925) about a bootlegger, followed, as well as numerous short stories. But Fitzgerald's health gave way in the 1930's, and he died in 1940, with The Last Tycoon, which has been called his most mature work, unfinished. Finding himself "unable to manage the crap-shooting episode" in "The Jelly-Bean," Fitzgerald says he turned it over to his wife, a Southern girl and a writer herself.*

## I

Jim Powell was a Jelly-bean. Much as I desire to make him an appealing character, I feel that it would be unscrupulous to deceive you on that point. He was a bred-in-the-bone, dyed-in-the-wool, ninety-nine three-quarters per cent Jelly-bean and he grew lazily all during Jelly-bean season, which is every season, down in the land of the Jelly-beans well below the Mason-Dixon line.

Now if you call a Memphis man a Jelly-bean he will quite possibly pull a long sinewy rope from his hip pocket and hang you to a convenient telegraph-pole. If you call a New Orleans man a Jelly-bean he will probably grin and ask you who is taking your girl to the Mardi Gras ball. The particular Jelly-bean patch which produced the protagonist of this history lies somewhere between the two — a little city of forty thousand that has dozed sleepily for forty thousand years in southern Georgia, occasionally stirring in its slumbers and muttering something about a war that took place sometime, somewhere, and that everyone else has forgotten long ago.

Jim was a Jelly-bean. I write that again because it has such a pleasant sound — rather like the beginning of a fairy story — as if Jim were nice. It somehow gives me a picture of him with a round, appetizing face and all sorts of leaves and vegetables growing out of his cap. But Jim was long and thin and bent at the waist from stooping over pool-tables, and he was what might have been known in the indiscriminating North as a corner loafer. "Jelly-bean" is the name throughout the undissolved Confederacy for one who spends his life conjugating the verb to idle in the first person singular — I am idling, I have idled, I will idle.

Jim was born in a white house on a green corner. It had four weather-beaten pillars in front and a great amount of lattice-work in the rear that made a cheerful criss-cross background for a flowery sun-drenched lawn. Originally

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the dwellers in the white house had owned the ground next door and next door to that and next door to that, but this had been so long ago that even Jim's father scarcely remembered it. He had, in fact, thought it a matter of so little moment that when he was dying from a pistol wound got in a brawl he neglected even to tell little Jim, who was five years old and miserably frightened. The white house became a boarding-house run by a tight-lipped lady from Macon, whom Jim called Aunt Mamie and detested with all his soul.

He became fifteen, went to high school, wore his hair in black snarls, and was afraid of girls. He hated his home where four women and one old man prolonged an interminable chatter from summer to summer about what lots the Powell place had originally included and what sort of flowers would be out next. Sometimes the parents of little girls in town, remembering Jim's mother and fancying a resemblance in the dark eyes and hair, invited him to parties, but parties made him shy and he much preferred sitting on a disconnected axle in Tilly's Garage, rolling the bones or exploring his mouth endlessly with a long straw. For pocket money, he picked up odd jobs, and it was due to this that he stopped going to parties. At his third party little Marjorie Haight had whispered indiscreetly and within hearing distance that he was a boy who brought the groceries sometimes. So instead of the two-step and polka, Jim had learned to throw any number he desired on the dice and had listened to spicy tales of all the shootings that had occurred in the surrounding country during the past fifty years.

He became eighteen. The war broke out and he enlisted as a gob and polished brass in the Charleston Navy-yard for a year. Then, by way of variety, he went North and polished brass in the Brooklyn Navy-yard for a year.

When the war was over he came home. He was twenty-one, his trousers were too short and too tight. His buttoned shoes were long and narrow. His tie was an alarming conspiracy of purple and pink marvellously scrolled, and over it were two blue eyes faded like a piece of very good old cloth long exposed to the sun.

In the twilight of one April evening when a soft gray had drifted down along the cottonfields and over the sultry town, he was a vague figure leaning against a board fence, whistling and gazing at the moon's rim above the lights of Jackson Street. His mind was working persistently on a problem that had held his attention for an hour. The Jelly-bean had been invited to a party.

Back in the days when all the boys had detested all the girls, Clark Darrow and Jim had sat side by side in school. But, while Jim's social aspirations had died in the oily air of the garage, Clark had alternately fallen in and out of love, gone to college, taken to drink, given it up, and, in short, become one of the best beaux of the town. Nevertheless Clark and Jim had retained a friendship that, though casual, was perfectly definite. That afternoon Clark's ancient Ford had slowed up beside Jim, who was on the sidewalk, and, out of a clear sky,



Clark had invited him to a party at the country club. The impulse that made him do this was no stranger than the impulse which made Jim accept. The latter was probably an unconscious ennui, a half-frightened sense of adventure. And now Jim was soberly thinking it over.

He began to sing, drumming his long foot idly on a stone block in the sidewalk till it wobbled up and down in time to the low throaty tune:

One mile from Home in Jelly-bean town,  
Lives Jeanne, the Jelly-bean Queen.  
She loves her dice and treats 'em nice;  
No dice would treat her mean.

He broke off and agitated the sidewalk to a bumpy gallop.

"Daggone!" he muttered, half aloud.

They would all be there — the old crowd, the crowd to which, by right of the white house, sold long since, and the portrait of the officer in gray over the mantel, Jim should have belonged. But that crowd had grown up together into a tight little set as gradually as the girls' dresses had lengthened inch by inch, as definitely as the boys' trousers had dropped suddenly to their ankles. And to that society of first names and dead puppy-loves Jim was an outsider — a running mate of poor whites. Most of the men knew him, condescendingly; he tipped his hat to three or four girls. That was all.

When the dusk had thickened into a blue setting for the moon, he walked through the hot, pleasantly pungent town to Jackson Street. The stores were closing and the last shoppers were drifting homeward, as if borne on the dreamy revolution of a slow merry-go-round. A street-fair farther down made a brilliant alley of vari-colored booths and contributed a blend of music to the night — an oriental dance on a calliope, a melancholy bugle in front of a freak show, a cheerful rendition of "Back Home in Tennessee" on a hand-organ.

The Jelly-bean stopped in a store and bought a collar. Then he sauntered along toward Soda Sam's, where he found the usual three or four cars of a summer evening parked in front and the little darkies running back and forth with sundaes and lemonades.

"Hello, Jim."

It was a voice at his elbow — Joe Ewing sitting in an automobile with Marylyn Wade. Nancy Lamar and a strange man were in the back seat.

The Jelly-bean tipped his hat quickly.

"Hi, Ben —" then, after an almost imperceptible pause — "How y' all?"

Passing, he ambled on toward the garage where he had a room up-stairs. His "How y' all" had been said to Nancy Lamar, to whom he had not spoken in fifteen years.

Nancy had a mouth like a remembered kiss and shadowy eyes and blue-black hair inherited from her mother who had been born in Budapest. Jim

passed her often in the street, walking small-boy fashion with her hands in her pockets, and he knew that with her inseparable Sally Carrol Hopper she had left a trail of broken hearts from Atlanta to New Orleans.

For a few fleeting moments Jim wished he could dance. Then he laughed and as he reached his door began to sing softly to himself:

Her Jelly Roll can twist your soul,  
Her eyes are big and brown,  
She's the Queen of the Queens of the Jelly-beans  
My Jeanne of Jelly-bean Town.

## II

At nine-thirty Jim and Clark met in front of Soda Sam's and started for the Country Club in Clark's Ford.

"Jim," asked Clark casually, as they rattled through the jasmine-scented night, "how do you keep alive?"

The Jelly-bean paused, considered.

"Well," he said finally, "I got a room over Tilly's Garage. I help him some with the cars in the afternoon an' he gives it to me free. Sometimes I drive one of his taxis and pick up a little thataway. I get fed up goin' that regular though."

"That all?"

"Well, when there's a lot of work I help him by the day — Saturdays usually — and then there's one main source of revenue I don't generally mention. Maybe you don't recollect I'm about the champion crap-shooter of this town. They make me shoot from a cup now because once I get the feel of a pair of dice they just roll for me."

Clark grinned appreciatively.

"I never could learn to set 'em so's they'd do what I wanted. Wish you'd shoot with Nancy Lamar some day and take all her money away from her. She will roll 'em with the boys and she loses more than her daddy can afford to give her. I happen to know she sold a good ring last month to pay a debt."

The Jelly-bean was non-committal.

"The white house on Elm Street still belong to you?"

Jim shook his head.

"Sold. Got a pretty good price, seein' it wasn't in a good part of town no more. Lawyer told me to put it into Liberty bonds. But Aunt Mamie got so she didn't have no sense, so it takes all the interest to keep her up at Great Farms Sanitarium."

"Hm."

"I got an old uncle up-state an' I reckon I kin go up there if ever I get sure enough pore. Nice farm, but not enough niggers around to work it. He's asked me to come up and help him, but I don't guess I'd take much to it. Too doggone lonesome —" He broke off suddenly. "Clark, I want to tell you I'm much obliged

to you for askin' me out, but I'd be a lot happier if you'd just stop the car right here an' let me walk back into town."

"Shucks!" Clark grunted. "Do you good to step out. You don't have to dance — just get out there on the floor and shake."

"Hold on," exclaimed Jim uneasily. "Don't you go leadin' me up to any girls and leavin' me there so I'll have to dance with 'em."

Clark laughed.

"'Cause," continued Jim desperately, "without you swear you won't do that I'm agoin' to get out right here an' my good legs goin' carry me back to Jackson Street."

They agreed after some argument that Jim, unmolested by females, was to view the spectacle from a secluded settee in the corner where Clark would join him whenever he wasn't dancing.

So ten o'clock found the Jelly-bean with his legs crossed and his arms conservatively folded, trying to look casually at home and politely uninterested in the dancers. At heart he was torn between overwhelming self-consciousness and an intense curiosity as to all that went on around him. He saw the girls emerge one by one from the dressing-room, stretching and pluming themselves like bright birds, smiling over their powdered shoulders at the chaperones, casting a quick glance around to take in the room and, simultaneously, the room's reaction to their entrance — and then, again like birds, alighting and nestling in the sober arms of their waiting escorts. Sally Carrol Hopper, blonde and lazy-eyed, appeared clad in her favorite pink and blinking like an awakened rose. Marjorie Haight, Marylyn Wade, Harriet Cary, all the girls he had seen loitering down Jackson Street by noon, now, curled and brilliantined and delicately tinted for the overhead lights, were miraculously strange Dresden figures of pink and blue and red and gold, fresh from the shop and not yet fully dried.

He had been there half an hour, totally uncheered by Clark's jovial visits which were each one accompanied by a "Hello, old boy, how you making out?" and a slap at his knee. A dozen males had spoken to him or stopped for a moment beside him, but he knew that they were each one surprised at finding him there and fancied that one or two were even slightly resentful. But at half past ten his embarrassment suddenly left him and a pull of breathless interest took him completely out of himself — Nancy Lamar had come out of the dressing-room.

She was dressed in yellow organdie, a costume of a hundred cool corners, with three tiers of ruffles and a big bow in back until she shed black and yellow around her in a sort of phosphorescent lustre. The Jelly-bean's eyes opened wide and a lump arose in his throat. For a minute she stood beside the door until her partner hurried up. Jim recognized him as the stranger who had been with her in Joe Ewing's car that afternoon. He saw her set her arms akimbo and say something in a low voice, and laugh. The man laughed too and Jim experienced

the quick pang of a weird new kind of pain. Some ray had passed between the pair, a shaft of beauty from that sun that had warmed him a moment since. The Jelly-bean felt suddenly like a weed in a shadow.

A minute later Clark approached him, bright-eyed and glowing.

"Hi, old man," he cried with some lack of originality. "How you making out?"

Jim replied that he was making out as well as could be expected.

"You come along with me," commanded Clark. "I've got something that'll put an edge on the evening."

Jim followed him awkwardly across the floor and up the stairs to the locker-room where Clark produced a flask of nameless yellow liquid.

"Good old corn."

Ginger ale arrived on a tray. Such potent nectar as "good old corn" needed some disguise beyond seltzer.

"Say, boy," exclaimed Clark breathlessly, "doesn't Nancy Lamar look beautiful?"

Jim nodded.

"Mighty beautiful," he agreed.

"She's all dolled up to a fare-you-well to-night," continued Clark. "Notice that fellow she's with?"

"Big fella? White pants?"

"Yeah. Well, that's Ogden Merritt from Savannah. Old man Merritt makes the Merritt safety razors. This fella's crazy about her. Been chasing after her all year."

"She's a wild baby," continued Clark, "but I like her. So does everybody. But she sure does do crazy stunts. She usually gets out alive, but she's got scars all over her reputation from one thing or another she's done."

"That so?" Jim passed over his glass. "That's good corn."

"Not so bad. Oh, she's a wild one. Shoots craps, say, boy! And she do like her highballs. Promised I'd give her one later on."

"She in love with this — Merritt?"

"Damned if I know. Seems like all the best girls around here marry fellas and go off somewhere."

He poured himself one more drink and carefully corked the bottle.

"Listen, Jim, I got to go dance and I'd be much obliged if you just stick this corn right on your hip as long as you're not dancing. If a man notices I've had a drink he'll come up and ask me and before I know it it's all gone and somebody else is having my good time."

So Nancy Lamar was going to marry. This toast of a town was to become the private property of an individual in white trousers — and all because white trousers' father had made a better razor than his neighbor. As they descended the stairs Jim found the idea inexplicably depressing. For the first time in his life

he felt a vague and romantic yearning. A picture of her began to form in his imagination — Nancy walking boylike and debonnaire along the street, taking an orange as tithe from a worshipful fruit-dealer, charging a dope on a mythical account at Soda Sam's, assembling a convoy of beaux and then driving off in triumphal state for an afternoon of splashing and singing.

The Jelly-bean walked out on the porch to a deserted corner, dark between the moon on the lawn and the single lighted door of the ballroom. There he found a chair and, lighting a cigarette, drifted into the thoughtless reverie that was his usual mood. Yet now it was a reverie made sensuous by the night and by the hot smell of damp powder puffs, tucked in the fronts of low dresses and distilling a thousand rich scents to float out through the open door. The music itself, blurred by a loud trombone, became hot and shadowy, a languorous overtone to the scraping of many shoes and slippers.

Suddenly the square of yellow light that fell through the door was obscured by a dark figure. A girl had come out of the dressing-room and was standing on the porch not more than ten feet away. Jim heard a low-breathed "doggone" and then she turned and saw him. It was Nancy Lamar.

Jim rose to his feet.

"Howdy?"

"Hello —" she paused, hesitated and then approached. "Oh, it's — Jim Powell."

He bowed slightly, tried to think of a casual remark.

"Do you suppose," she began quickly, "I mean — do you know anything about gum?"

"What?"

"I've got gum on my shoe. Some utter ass left his or her gum on the floor and of course I stepped in it."

Jim blushed, inappropriately.

"Do you know how to get it off?" she demanded petulantly. "I've tried a knife. I've tried every damn thing in the dressing-room. I've tried soap and water — and even perfume and I've ruined my powder puff trying to make it stick to that."

Jim considered the question in some agitation.

"Why — I think maybe gasoline —"

The words had scarcely left his lips when she grasped his hand and pulled him at a run off the low veranda, over a flower bed and at a gallop toward a group of cars parked in the moonlight by the first hole of the golf course.

"Turn on the gasoline," she commanded breathlessly.

"What?"

"For the gum of course. I've got to get it off. I can't dance with gum on."

Obediently Jim turned to the cars and began inspecting them with a view to obtaining the desired solvent. Had she demanded a cylinder he would have done his best to wrench one out.

"Here," he said after a moment's search. "Here's one that's easy. Got a handkerchief?"

"It's up-stairs wet. I used it for the soap and water."

Jim laboriously explored his pockets.

"Don't believe I got one either."

"Doggone it! Well, we can turn it on and let it run on the ground."

He turned the spout; a dripping began.

"More!"

He turned it on fuller. The dripping became a flow and formed an oily pool that glistened brightly, reflecting a dozen tremulous moons on its quivering bosom.

"Ah," she sighed contentedly, "let it all out. The only thing to do is to wade in it."

In desperation he turned on the tap full and the pool suddenly widened, sending tiny rivers and trickles in all directions.

"That's fine. That's something like."

Raising her skirts she stepped gracefully in.

"I know this'll take it off," she murmured.

Jim smiled.

"There's lots more cars."

She stepped daintily out of the gasoline and began scraping her slippers, side and bottom, on the running-board of the automobile. The Jelly-bean contained himself no longer. He bent double with explosive laughter and after a second she joined in.

"You're here with Clark Darrow, aren't you?" she asked as they walked back toward the veranda.

"Yes."

"You know where he is now?"

"Out dancin', I reckon."

"The deuce. He promised me a highball."

"Well," said Jim, "I guess that'll be all right. I got his bottle right here in my pocket."

She smiled at him radiantly.

"I guess maybe you'll need ginger ale though," he added.

"Not me. Just the bottle."

"Sure enough?"

She laughed scornfully.

"Try me. I can drink anything any man can. Let's sit down."

She perched herself on the side of a table and he dropped into one of the wicker chairs beside her. Taking out the cork she held the flask to her lips and took a long drink. He watched her fascinated.

"Like it?"

She shook her head breathlessly.

"No, but I like the way it makes me feel. I think most people are that way."

Jim agreed.

"My daddy liked it too well. It got him."

"American men," said Nancy, gravely, "don't know how to drink."

"What?" Jim was startled.

"In fact," she went on carelessly, "they don't know how to do anything very well. The one thing I regret in my life is that I wasn't born in England."

"In England?"

"Yes. It's the one regret of my life that I wasn't."

"Do you like it over there?"

"Yes. Immensely. I've never been there in person, but I've met a lot of Englishmen who were over here in the army, Oxford and Cambridge men — you know, that's like Sewanee and University of Georgia are here — and of course I've read a lot of English novels."

Jim was interested, amazed.

"D' you ever hear of Lady Diana Manners?" she asked earnestly.

No, Jim had not.

"Well, she's what I'd like to be. Dark, you know, like me, and wild as sin. She's the girl who rode her horse up the steps of some cathedral or church or something and all the novelists made their heroines do it afterwards."

Jim nodded politely. He was out of his depths.

"Pass the bottle," suggested Nancy. "I'm going to take another little one. A little drink wouldn't hurt a baby."

"You see," she continued, again breathless after a draught. "People over there have style. Nobody has style here. I mean the boys here aren't really worth dressing up for or doing sensational things for. Don't you know?"

"I suppose so — I mean I suppose not," murmured Jim.

"And I'd like to do 'em an' all. I'm really the only girl in town that has style."

She stretched out her arms and yawned pleasantly.

"Pretty evening."

"Sure is," agreed Jim.

"Like to have boat," she suggested dreamily. "Like to sail out on a silver lake, say the Thames, for instance. Have champagne and caviare sandwiches along. Have about eight people. And one of the men would jump overboard to amuse the party and get drowned like a man did with Lady Diana Manners once."

"Did he do it to please her?"

"Didn't mean drown himself to please her. He just meant to jump overboard and make everybody laugh."

"I reckon they just died laughin' when he drowned."

"Oh, I suppose they laughed a little," she admitted. "I imagine she did, anyway. She's pretty hard, I guess — like I am."

"You hard?"

"Like nails." She yawned again and added, "Give me a little more from that bottle."

Jim hesitated but she held out her hand defiantly.

"Don't treat me like a girl," she warned him. "I'm not like any girl *you* ever saw." She considered. "Still, perhaps you're right. You got — you got old head on young shoulders."

She jumped to her feet and moved toward the door. The Jelly-bean rose also.

"Good-bye," she said politely, "good-bye. Thanks, Jelly-bean."

Then she stepped inside and left him wide-eyed upon the porch.

### III

At twelve o'clock a procession of cloaks issued single file from the women's dressing-room and, each one pairing with a coated beau like dancers meeting in a cotillion figure, drifted through the door with sleepy happy laughter — through the door into the dark where autos backed and snorted and parties called to one another and gathered around the water-cooler.

Jim, sitting in his corner, rose to look for Clark. They had met at eleven; then Clark had gone in to dance. So, seeking him, Jim wandered into the soft-drink stand that had once been a bar. The room was deserted except for a sleepy Negro dozing behind the counter and two boys lazily fingering a pair of dice at one of the tables. Jim was about to leave when he saw Clark coming in. At the same moment Clark looked up.

"Hi, Jim!" he commanded. "C'mon over and help us with this bottle. I guess there's not much left, but there's one all around."

Nancy, the man from Savannah, Marylyn Wade, and Joe Ewing were lolling and laughing in the doorway. Nancy caught Jim's eye and winked at him humorously.

They drifted over to a table and arranging themselves around it waited for the waiter to bring ginger ale. Jim, faintly ill at ease, turned his eyes on Nancy, who had drifted into a nickel crap game with the two boys at the next table.

"Bring them over here," suggested Clark.

Joe looked around.

"We don't want to draw a crowd. It's against club rules."

"Nobody's around," insisted Clark, "except Mr. Taylor. He's walking up and down like a wild-man trying to find out who let all the gasoline out of his car."

There was a general laugh.

"I bet a million Nancy got something on her shoe again. You can't park when she's around."

"O Nancy, Mr. Taylor's looking for you!"



Nancy's cheeks were glowing with excitement over the game. "I haven't seen his silly little flivver in two weeks."

Jim felt a sudden silence. He turned and saw an individual of uncertain age standing in the doorway.

Clark's voice punctuated the embarrassment.

"Won't you join us, Mr. Taylor?"

"Thanks."

Mr. Taylor spread his unwelcome presence over a chair. "Have to, I guess. I'm waiting till they dig me up some gasoline. Somebody got funny with my car."

His eyes narrowed and he looked quickly from one to the other. Jim wondered what he had heard from the doorway — tried to remember what had been said.

"I'm right to-night," Nancy sang out, "and my four bits is in the ring."

"Faded!" snapped Taylor suddenly.

"Why, Mr. Taylor, I didn't know you shot craps!" Nancy was overjoyed to find that he had seated himself and instantly covered her bet. They had openly disliked each other since the night she had definitely discouraged a series of rather pointed advances.

"All right, babies, do it for your mamma. Just one little seven." Nancy was *cooing* to the dice. She rattled them with a brave underhand flourish, and rolled them out on the table.

"Ah-h! I suspected it. And now again with the dollar up."

Five passes to her credit found Taylor a bad loser. She was making it personal, and after each success Jim watched triumph flutter across her face. She was doubling with each throw — such luck could scarcely last.

"Better go easy," he cautioned her timidly.

"Ah, but watch this one," she whispered. It was eight on the dice and she called her number.

"Little Ada, this time we're going South."

Ada from Decatur rolled over the table. Nancy was flushed and half-hysterical, but her luck was holding. She drove the pot up and up, refusing to drag. Taylor was drumming with his fingers on the table, but he was in to stay.

Then Nancy tried for a ten and lost the dice. Taylor seized them avidly. He shot in silence, and in the hush of excitement the clatter of one pass after another on the table was the only sound.

Now Nancy had the dice again, but her luck had broken. An hour passed. Back and forth it went. Taylor had been at it again — and again and again. They were even at last — Nancy lost her ultimate five dollars.

"Will you take my check," she said quickly, "for fifty, and we'll shoot it all?" Her voice was a little unsteady and her hand shook as she reached to the money.

Clark exchanged an uncertain but alarmed glance with Joe Ewing. Taylor shot again. He had Nancy's check.

"How 'bout another?" she said wildly. "Jes' any bank'll do — money everywhere as a matter of fact."

Jim understood — the "good old corn" he had given her — the "good old corn" she had taken since. He wished he dared interfere — a girl of that age and position would hardly have two bank accounts. When the clock struck two he contained himself no longer.

"May I — can't you let me roll 'em for you?" he suggested, his low, lazy voice a little strained.

Suddenly sleepy and listless, Nancy flung the dice down before him.

"All right — old boy! As Lady Diana Manners says, 'Shoot 'em, Jelly-bean' — My luck's gone."

"Mr. Taylor," said Jim, carelessly, "we'll shoot for one of those there checks against the cash."

Half an hour later Nancy swayed forward and clapped him on the back.

"Stole my luck, you did." She was nodding her head sagely.

Jim swept up the last check and putting it with the others tore them into confetti and scattered them on the floor. Someone started singing, and Nancy kicking her chair backward rose to her feet.

"Ladies and gentlemen," she announced. "Ladies — that's you Marylyn. I want to tell the world that Mr. Jim Powell, who is a well-known Jelly-bean of this city, is an exception to a great rule — 'lucky in dice — unlucky in love.' He's lucky in dice, and as matter fact I — I *love* him. Ladies and gentlemen, Nancy Lamar, famous dark-haired beauty often featured in the *Herald* as one th' most popular members of younger set as other girls are often featured in this particular case. Wish to announce — wish to announce, anyway, Gentlemen —" She tipped suddenly. Clark caught her and restored her balance.

"My error," she laughed, "she stoops to — stoops to — anyways — We'll drink to Jelly-bean . . . Mr. Jim Powell, King of the Jelly-beans."

And a few minutes later as Jim waited hat in hand for Clark in the darkness of that same corner of the porch where she had come searching for gasoline, she appeared suddenly beside him.

"Jelly-bean," she said, "are you here, Jelly-bean? I think —" and her slight unsteadiness seemed part of an enchanted dream — "I think you deserve one of my sweetest kisses for that, Jelly-bean."

For an instant her arms were around his neck — her lips were pressed to his.

"I'm a wild part of the world, Jelly-bean, but you did me a good turn."

Then she was gone, down the porch, over the cricket-loud lawn. Jim saw Merritt come out the front door and say something to her angrily — saw her laugh and, turning away, walk with averted eyes to his car. Marylyn and Joe followed, singing a drowsy song about a Jazz baby.

Clark came out and joined Jim on the steps, "All pretty lit, I guess," he yawned. "Merritt's in a mean mood. He's certainly off Nancy."

Over east along the golf course a faint rug of gray spread itself across the feet of the night. The party in the car began to chant a chorus as the engine warmed up.

"Good-night, everybody," called Clark.

"Good-night, Clark."

"Good-night."

There was a pause, and then a soft, happy voice added,

"Good-night, Jelly-bean."

The car drove off to a burst of singing. A rooster on a farm across the way took up a solitary mournful crow, and behind them a last Negro waiter turned out the porch light. Jim and Clark strolled over toward the Ford, their shoes crunching raucously on the gravel drive.

"Oh, boy!" sighed Clark softly, "how you can set those dice!"

It was still too dark for him to see the flush on Jim's thin cheeks — or to know that it was a flush of unfamiliar shame.

#### IV

Over Tilly's Garage a bleak room echoed all day to the rumble and snorting down-stairs and the singing of the Negro washers as they turned the hose on the cars outside. It was a cheerless square of a room, punctuated with a bed and a battered table on which lay half a dozen books — Joe Miller's "Slow Train through Arkansas," "Lucille," in an old edition very much annotated in an old-fashioned hand; "The Eyes of the World," by Harold Bell Wright, and an ancient prayer-book of the Church of England with the name Alice Powell and the date 1831 written on the flyleaf.

The East, gray when the Jelly-bean entered the garage, became a rich and vivid blue as he turned on his solitary electric light. He snapped it out again, and going to the window rested his elbows on the sill and stared into the deepening morning. With the awakening of his emotions, his first perception was a sense of futility, a dull ache at the utter grayness of his life. A wall had sprung up suddenly around him hedging him in, a wall as definite and tangible as the white wall of his bare room. And with his perception of this wall all that had been the romance of his existence, the casualness, the light-hearted improvisence, the miraculous open-handedness of life faded out. The Jelly-bean strolling up Jackson Street humming a lazy song, known at every shop and street stand, cropful of easy greeting and local wit, sad sometimes for only the sake of sadness and the flight of time — that Jelly-bean was suddenly vanished. The very name was a reproach, a triviality. With a flood of insight he knew that Merritt must despise him, that even Nancy's kiss in the dawn would have awakened not jealousy but only a contempt for Nancy's so lowering herself.

And on his part the Jelly-bean had used for her a dingy subterfuge learned from the garage. He had been her moral laundry; the stains were his.

As the gray became blue, brightened and filled the room, he crossed to his bed and threw himself down on it, gripping the edges fiercely.

"I love her," he cried aloud, "God!"

As he said this something gave way within him like a lump melting in his throat. The air cleared and became radiant with dawn, and turning over on his face he began to sob dully into the pillow.

In the sunshine of three o'clock Clark Darrow chugging painfully along Jackson Street was hailed by the Jelly-bean, who stood on the curb with his fingers in his vest pockets.

"Hi!" called Clark, bringing his Ford to an astonishing stop alongside. "Just get up?"

The Jelly-bean shook his head.

"Never did go to bed. Felt sorta restless, so I took a long walk this morning out in the country. Just got into town this minute."

"Should think you *would* feel restless. I been feeling thataway all day —"

"I'm thinkin' of leavin' town," continued the Jelly-bean, absorbed by his own thoughts. "Been thinkin' of goin' up on the farm, and takin' a little that work off Uncle Dun. Reckin I been bummin' too long."

Clark was silent and the Jelly-bean continued:

"I reckon maybe after Aunt Mamie dies I could sink that money of mine in the farm and make somethin' out of it. All my people originally came from that part up there. Had a big place."

Clark looked at him curiously.

"That's funny," he said. "This — this sort of affected me the same way."

The Jelly-bean hesitated.

"I don't know," he began slowly, "somethin' about — about that girl last night talkin' about a lady named Diana Manners — an English lady, sorta got me thinkin'!" He drew himself up and looked oddly at Clark. "I had a family once," he said defiantly.

Clark nodded.

"I know."

"And I'm the last of 'em," continued the Jelly-bean, his voice rising slightly, "and I ain't worth shucks. Name they call me by means jelly — weak and wobbly like. People who weren't nothin' when my folks was a lot turn up their noses when they pass me on the street."

Again Clark was silent.

"So I'm through. I'm goin' to-day. And when I come back to this town it's going to be like a gentleman."

Clark took out his handkerchief and wiped his damp brow.

"Reckon you're not the only one it shook up," he admitted gloomily. "All this thing of girls going round like they do is going to stop right quick. Too bad, too, but everybody'll have to see it thataway."

"Do you mean," demanded Jim in surprise, "that all that's leaked out?"

"Leaked out? How on earth could they keep it secret? It'll be announced in the papers to-night. Doctor Lamar's got to save his name somehow."

Jim put his hands on the sides of the car and tightened his long fingers on the metal.

"Do you mean Taylor investigated those checks?"

It was Clark's turn to be surprised.

"Haven't you heard what happened?"

Jim's startled eyes were answer enough.

"Why," announced Clark dramatically, "those four got another bottle of corn, got tight and decided to shock the town — so Nancy and that fella Merritt were married in Rockville at seven o'clock this morning."

A tiny indentation appeared in the metal under the Jelly-bean's fingers.

"Married?"

"Sure enough. Nancy sobered up and rushed back into town, crying and frightened to death — claimed it'd all been a mistake. First Doctor Lamar went wild and was going to kill Merritt, but finally they got it patched up some way, and Nancy and Merritt went to Savannah on the two-thirty train."

Jim closed his eyes and with an effort overcame a sudden sickness.

"It's too bad," said Clark philosophically. "I don't mean the wedding — reckon that's all right, though I don't guess Nancy cared a darn about him. But it's a crime for a nice girl like that to hurt her family that way."

The Jelly-bean let go the car and turned away. Again something was going on inside him, some inexplicable but almost chemical change.

"Where you going?" asked Clark.

The Jelly-bean turned and looked dully back over his shoulder.

"Got to go," he muttered. "Been up too long; feelin' right sick."

"Oh."

The street was hot at three and hotter still at four, the April dust seeming to enmesh the sun and give it forth again as a world-old joke forever played on an eternity of afternoons. But at half past four a first layer of quiet fell and the shades lengthened under the awnings and heavy foliaged trees. In this heat nothing mattered. All life was weather, a waiting through the hot where events had no significance for the cool that was soft and caressing like a woman's hand on a tired forehead. Down in Georgia there is a feeling — perhaps inarticulate — that this is the greatest wisdom of the South — so after a while the Jelly-bean turned into a pool-hall on Jackson Street where he was sure to find a congenial crowd who would make all the old jokes — the ones he knew.

## QUESTIONS

1. When and where did the story take place?
2. Why is Jim Powell called a Jelly-bean?
3. Find passages which describe the Southern climate, a country-club affair, a small town the dawn.
4. What stakes did Jim shoot for on the night of the club dance?
5. What is the author's attitude toward the weaknesses of his characters? Are Jim and Nancy punished?
6. Is the conclusion more satisfactory than a happy ending would have been?
7. Discuss realism and romanticism in this story. What did you like best — plot, character, style, setting?

William Faulkner

## Barn Burning

*"I am not a literary man. I am a farmer who just likes to tell stories," William Faulkner said to one interviewer. He was born and has lived most of his life in the Mississippi which furnishes the setting for his fiction. During World War I he fought as a volunteer with the British Royal Air Force. Except for that adventure, and brief intervals in New Orleans and New York, he has remained in his home town, Oxford, Mississippi, writing up in his novels and short stories (The Sound and the Fury, 1929, The Unvanquished, 1938, etc.) the legend of the South, a legend of honor and violence and change. In 1950 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his "powerful and artistically independent contribution to the new American novel."*

The store in which the Justice of the Peace's court was sitting smelled of cheese. The boy, crouched on his nail keg at the back of the crowded room, knew he smelled cheese, and more: from where he sat he could see the ranked shelves close-packed with the solid, squat, dynamic shapes of tin cans whose labels his stomach read, not from the lettering which meant nothing to his mind but from the scarlet devils and the silver curve of fish — this, the cheese which he knew he smelled and the hermetic meat which his intestines believed he smelled coming in intermittent gusts momentary and brief between the other constant one, the smell and sense just a little of fear because mostly of despair and grief,

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the old fierce pull of blood. He could not see the table where the Justice sat and before which his father and his father's enemy (our enemy he thought in that despair; *ourn! mine and hisn both! He's my father!*) stood, but he could hear them, the two of them that is, because his father had said no word yet:

"But what proof have you, Mr. Harris?"

"I told you. The hog got into my corn. I caught it up and sent it back to him. He had no fence that would hold it. I told him so, warned him. The next time I put the hog in my pen. When he came to get it I gave him enough wire to patch up his pen. The next time I put the hog up and kept it. I rode down to his house and saw the wire I gave him still rolled on to the spool in his yard. I told him he could have the hog when he paid me a dollar pound fee. That evening a nigger came with the dollar and got the hog. He was a strange nigger. He said, 'He say to tell you wood and hay kin burn.' I said, 'What?' 'That whut he say to tell you,' the nigger said. 'Wood and hay kin burn.' That night my barn burned. I got the stock out but I lost the barn."

"Where is the nigger? Have you got him?"

"He was a strange nigger, I tell you. I don't know what became of him."

"But that's not proof. Don't you see that's not proof?"

"Get that boy up here. He knows." For a moment the boy thought too that the man meant his older brother until Harris said, "Not him. The little one. The boy," and, crouching, small for his age, small and wiry like his father, in patched and faded jeans even too small for him, with straight, uncombed, brown hair and eyes gray and wild as storm scud, he saw the men between himself and the table part and become a lane of grim faces, at the end of which he saw the Justice, a shabby, collarless, graying man in spectacles, beckoning him. He felt no floor under his bare feet; he seemed to walk beneath the palpable weight of the grim turning faces. His father, stiff in his black Sunday coat donned not for the trial but for the moving, did not even look at him. *He aims for me to lie*, he thought, again with that frantic grief and despair. *And I will have to do hit.*

"What's your name, boy?" the Justice said.

"Colonel Sartoris Snopes," the boy whispered.

"Hey?" the Justice said. "Talk louder. Colonel Sartoris? I reckon anybody named for Colonel Sartoris in this country can't help but tell the truth, can they?" The boy said nothing. *Enemy! Enemy!* he thought; for a moment he could not even see, could not see that the Justice's face was kindly nor discern that his voice was troubled when he spoke to the man named Harris: "Do you want me to question this boy?" But he could hear, and during those subsequent long seconds while there was absolutely no sound in the crowded little room save that of quiet and intent breathing it was as if he had swung outward at the end of a grape vine, over a ravine, and at the top of the swing had been caught in a prolonged instant of mesmerized gravity, weightless in time.

"No!" Harris said violently, explosively. "Damnation! Send him out of

here!" Now time, the fluid world, rushed beneath him again, the voices coming to him again through the smell of cheese and sealed meat, the fear and despair and the old grief of blood:

"This case is closed. I can't find against you, Snopes, but I can give you advice. Leave this country and don't come back to it."

His father spoke for the first time, his voice cold and harsh, level, without emphasis: "I aim to. I don't figure to stay in a country among people who . . ." he said something unprintable and vile, addressed to no one.

"That'll do," the Justice said. "Take your wagon and get out of this country before dark. Case dismissed."

His father turned, and he followed the stiff black coat, the wiry figure walking a little stiffly from where a Confederate provost's man's musket ball had taken him in the heel on a stolen horse thirty years ago, followed the two backs now, since his older brother had appeared from somewhere in the crowd, no taller than the father but thicker, chewing tobacco steadily, between the two lines of grim-faced men and out of the store and across the worn gallery and down the sagging steps and among the dogs and half-grown boys in the mild May dust, where as he passed a voice hissed:

"Barn burner!"

Again he could not see, whirling; there was a face in a red haze, moonlike, bigger than the full moon, the owner of it half again his size, he leaping in the red haze toward the face, feeling no blow, feeling no shock when his head struck the earth, scrabbling up and leaping again, feeling no blow this time either and tasting no blood, scrabbling up to see the other boy in full flight and himself already leaping into pursuit as his father's hand jerked him back, the harsh, cold voice speaking above him: "Go get in the wagon."

It stood in a grove of locusts and mulberries across the road. His two hulking sisters in their Sunday dresses and his mother and her sister in calico and sun-bonnets were already in it, sitting on and among the sorry residue of the dozen and more movings which even the boy could remember — the battered stove, the broken beds and chairs, the clock inlaid with mother-of-pearl, which would not run, stopped at some fourteen minutes past two o'clock of a dead and forgotten day and time, which had been his mother's dowry. She was crying, though when she saw him she drew her sleeve across her face and began to descend from the wagon. "Get back," the father said.

"He's hurt. I got to get some water and wash his . . ."

"Get back in the wagon," his father said. He got in too, over the tail-gate. His father mounted to the seat where the older brother already sat and struck the gaunt mules two savage blows with the peeled willow, but without heat. It was not even sadistic; it was exactly that same quality which in later years would cause his descendants to over-run the engine before putting a motor car into motion, striking and reining back in the same movement. The wagon went



on, the store with its quiet crowd of grimly watching men dropped behind; a curve in the road hid it. *Forever* he thought. *Maybe he's done satisfied now, now that he has . . .* stopping himself, not to say it aloud even to himself. His mother's hand touched his shoulder.

"Does hit hurt?" she said.

"Naw," he said. "Hit don't hurt. Lemme be."

"Can't you wipe some of the blood off before hit dries?"

"I'll wash to-night," he said. "Lemme be, I tell you."

The wagon went on. He did not know where they were going. None of them ever did or ever asked, because it was always somewhere, always a house of sorts waiting for them a day or two days or even three days away. Likely his father had already arranged to make a crop on another farm before he . . . Again he had to stop himself. He (the father) always did. There was something about his wolflike independence and even courage when the advantage was at least neutral which impressed strangers, as if they got from his latent ravening ferocity not so much a sense of dependability as a feeling that his ferocious conviction in the rightness of his own actions would be of advantage to all whose interest lay with his.

That night they camped, in a grove of oaks and beeches where a spring ran. The nights were still cool and they had a fire against it, of a rail lifted from a nearby fence and cut into lengths — a small fire, neat, niggard almost, a shrewd fire; such fires were his father's habit and custom always, even in freezing weather. Older, the boy might have remarked this and wondered why not a big one; why should not a man who had not only seen the waste and extravagance of war, but who had in his blood an inherent voracious prodigality with material not his own, have burned everything in sight? Then he might have gone a step farther and thought that that was the reason: that niggard blaze was the living fruit of nights passed during those four years in the woods hiding from all men, blue or gray, with his strings of horses (captured horses, he called them). And older still, he might have divined the true reason: that the element of fire spoke to some deep mainspring of his father's being, as the element of steel or of powder spoke to other men, as the one weapon for the preservation of integrity, else breath were not worth the breathing, and hence to be regarded with respect and used with discretion.

But he did not think this now and he had seen those same niggard blazes all his life. He merely ate his supper beside it and was already half asleep over his iron plate when his father called him, and once more he followed the stiff back, the stiff and ruthless limp, up the slope and on to the starlit road where, turning, he could see his father against the stars but without face or depth — a shape black, flat, and bloodless as though cut from tin in the iron folds of the frockcoat which had not been made for him, the voice harsh like tin and without heat like tin:

"You were fixing to tell them. You would have told him." He didn't answer. His father struck him with the flat of his hand on the side of the head, hard but without heat, exactly as he had struck the two mules at the store, exactly as he would strike either of them with any stick in order to kill a horse fly, his voice still without heat or anger: "You're getting to be a man. You got to learn. You got to learn to stick to your own blood or you ain't going to have any blood to stick to you. Do you think either of them, any man there this morning, would? Don't you know all they wanted was a chance to get at me because they knew I had them beat? Eh?" Later, twenty years later, he was to tell himself, "If I had said they wanted only truth, justice, he would have hit me again." But now he said nothing. He was not crying. He just stood there. "Answer me," his father said.

"Yes," he whispered. His father turned.

"Get on to bed. We'll be there to-morrow."

To-morrow they were there. In the early afternoon the wagon stopped before a paintless two-room house identical almost with the dozen others it had stopped before even in the boy's ten years, and again, as on the other dozen occasions, his mother and aunt got down and began to unload the wagon, although his two sisters and his father and brother had not moved.

"Likely hit ain't fitten for hawgs," one of the sisters said.

"Nevertheless, fit it will and you'll hog it and like it," his father said. "Get out of them chairs and help your Ma unload."

The two sisters got down, big, bovine, in a flutter of cheap ribbons; one of them drew from the jumbled wagon bed a battered lantern, the other a worn broom. His father handed the reins to the older son and began to climb stiffly over the wheel. "When they get unloaded, take the team to the barn and feed them." Then he said, and at first the boy thought he was still speaking to his brother: "Come with me."

"Me?" he said.

"Yes," his father said. "You."

"Abner," his mother said. His father paused and looked back — the harsh level stare beneath the shaggy, graying, irascible brows.

"I reckon I'll have a word with the man that aims to begin to-morrow ownin' me body and soul for the next eight months."

They went back up the road. A week ago — or before last night, that is — he would have asked where they were going, but not now. His father had struck him before last night but never before had he paused afterward to explain why; it was as if the blow and the following calm, outrageous voice still rang, reper-cussed, divulging nothing to him save the terrible handicap of being young, the light weight of his few years, just heavy enough to prevent his soaring free of the world as it seemed to be ordered but not heavy enough to keep him footed solid in it, to resist it and try to change the course of its events.

Presently he could see the grove of oaks and cedars and the other flowering

trees and shrubs where the house would be, though not the house yet. They walked beside a fence massed with honeysuckle and Cherokee roses and came to a gate swinging open between two brick pillars, and now, beyond a sweep of drive, he saw the house for the first time and at that instant he forgot his father and the terror and despair both, and even when he remembered his father again (who had not stopped) the terror and despair did not return. Because, for all the twelve movings, they had sojourned until now in a poor country, a land of small farms and fields and houses, and he had never seen a house like this before. *Hit's big as a courthouse* he thought quietly, with a surge of peace and joy whose reason he could not have thought into words, being too young for that: *They are safe from him. People whose lives are a part of this peace and dignity are beyond his touch, he no more to them than a buzzing wasp: capable of stinging for a little moment but that's all; the spell of this peace and dignity rendering even the barns and stable and cribs which belong to it impervious to the puny flames he might contrive . . .* this, the peace and joy, ebbing for an instant as he looked again at the stiff black back, the stiff and implacable limp of the figure which was not dwarfed by the house, for the reason that it had never looked big anywhere and which now, against the serene columned backdrop, had more than ever that impervious quality of something cut ruthlessly from tin, depthless, as though, sidewise to the sun, it would cast no shadow. Watching him, the boy remarked the absolutely undeviating course which his father held and saw the stiff foot come squarely down in a pile of fresh droppings where a horse had stood in the drive and which his father could have avoided by a simple change of stride. But it ebbed only for a moment, though he could not have thought this into words either, walking on in the spell of the house, which he could even want but without envy, without sorrow, certainly never with that ravening and jealous rage which unknown to him walked in the ironlike black coat before him: *Maybe he will feel it too. Maybe it will even change him now from what maybe he couldn't help but be.*

They crossed the portico. Now he could hear his father's stiff foot as it came down on the boards with clocklike finality, a sound out of all proportion to the displacement of the body it bore and which was not dwarfed either by the white door before it, as though it had attained to a sort of vicious and ravening minimum not to be dwarfed by anything — the flat, wide, black hat, the formal coat of broadcloth which had once been black but which had now that friction-glazed greenish cast of the bodies of old house flies, the lifted sleeve which was too large, the lifted hand like a curled claw. The door opened so promptly that the boy knew the Negro must have been watching them all the time, an old man with neat grizzled hair, in a linen jacket, who stood barring the door with his body, saying, "Wipe yo foots, white man, fo you come in here. Major ain't home nohow."

"Get out of my way, nigger," his father said, without heat too, flinging the

door back and the Negro also and entering, his hat still on his head. And now the boy saw the prints of the stiff foot on the doorjamb and saw them appear on the pale rug behind the machinelike deliberation of the foot which seemed to bear (or transmit) twice the weight which the body compassed. The Negro was shouting "Miss Lula! Miss Lula!" somewhere behind them, then the boy, deluged as though by a warm wave by a suave turn of carpeted stair and a pendant glitter of chandeliers and a mute gleam of gold frames, heard the swift feet and saw her too, a lady — perhaps he had never seen her like before either — in a gray, smooth gown with lace at the throat and an apron tied at the waist and the sleeves turned back, wiping cake or biscuit dough from her hands with a towel as she came up the hall, looking not at his father at all but at the tracks on the blond rug with an expression of incredulous amazement.

"I tried," the Negro cried. "I tole him to . . ."

"Will you please go away?" she said in a shaking voice. "Major de Spain is not at home. Will you please go away?"

His father had not spoken again. He did not speak again. He did not even look at her. He just stood stiff in the center of the rug, in his hat, the shaggy iron-gray brows twitching slightly above the pebble-colored eyes as he appeared to examine the house with brief deliberation. Then with the same deliberation he turned; the boy watched him pivot on the good leg and saw the stiff foot drag round the arc of the turning, leaving a final long and fading smear. His father never looked at it, he never once looked down at the rug. The Negro held the door. It closed behind them, upon the hysteric and indistinguishable woman-wail. His father stopped at the top of the steps and scraped his boot clean on the edge of it. At the gate he stopped again. He stood for a moment, planted stiffly on the stiff foot, looking back at the house. "Pretty and white, ain't it?" he said. "That's sweat. Nigger sweat. Maybe it ain't white enough yet to suit him. Maybe he wants to mix some white sweat with it."

Two hours later the boy was chopping wood behind the house within which his mother and aunt and the two sisters (the mother and aunt, not the two girls, he knew that; even at this distance and muffled by walls the flat loud voices of the two girls emanated an incorrigible idle inertia) were setting up the stove to prepare a meal, when he heard the hooves and saw the linen-clad man on a fine sorrel mare, whom he recognized even before he saw the rolled rug in front of the Negro youth following on a fat bay carriage horse — a suffused, angry face vanishing, still at full gallop, beyond the corner of the house where his father and brother were sitting in the two tilted chairs; and a moment later, almost before he could have put the axe down, he heard the hooves again and watched the sorrel mare go back out of the yard, already galloping again. Then his father began to shout one of the sisters' names, who presently emerged backward from the kitchen door dragging the rolled rug along the ground by one end while the other sister walked behind it.

"If you ain't going to tote, go on and set up the wash pot," the first said.

"You, Sarty!" the second shouted. "Set up the wash pot!" His father appeared at the door, framed against that shabbiness, as he had been against that other bland perfection, impervious to either, the mother's anxious face at his shoulder.

"Go on," the father said. "Pick it up." The two sisters stooped, broad, lethargic; stooping, they presented an incredible expanse of pale cloth and a flutter of tawdry ribbons.

"If I thought enough of a rug to have to git hit all the way from France I wouldn't keep hit where folks coming in would have to tromp on hit," the first said. They raised the rug.

"Abner," the mother said. "Let me do it."

"You go back and git dinner," his father said. "I'll tend to this."

From the woodpile through the rest of the afternoon the boy watched them, the rug spread flat in the dust beside the bubbling wash-pot, the two sisters stooping over it with that profound and lethargic reluctance, while the father stood over them in turn, implacable and grim, driving them though never raising his voice again. He could smell the harsh homemade lye they were using; he saw his mother come to the door once and look toward them with an expression not anxious now but very like despair; he saw his father turn, and he fell to with the axe and saw from the corner of his eye his father raise from the ground a flattish fragment of field stone and examine it and return to the pot, and this time his mother actually spoke: "Abner. Abner. Please don't. Please, Abner."

Then he was done too. It was dusk; the whippoorwills had already begun. He could smell coffee from the room where they would presently eat the cold food remaining from the mid-afternoon meal, though when he entered the house he realized they were having coffee again probably because there was a fire on the hearth, before which the rug now lay spread over the backs of the two chairs. The tracks of his father's foot were gone. Where they had been were now long, water-cloudy scoriations resembling the sporadic course of a lilliputian mowing machine.

It still hung there while they ate the cold food and then went to bed, scattered without order or claim up and down the two rooms, his mother in one bed, where his father would later lie, the older brother in the other, himself, the aunt, and the two sisters on pallets on the floor. But his father was not in bed yet. The last thing the boy remembered was the depthless, harsh silhouette of the hat and coat bending over the rug and it seemed to him that he had not even closed his eyes when the silhouette was standing over him, the fire almost dead behind it, the stiff foot prodding him awake. "Catch up the mule," his father said.

When he returned with the mule his father was standing in the black door, the rolled rug over his shoulder. "Ain't you going to ride?" he said.

"No. Give me your foot."

He bent his knee into his father's hand, the wiry, surprising power flowed smoothly, rising, he rising with it, on to the mule's bare back (they had owned a saddle once; the boy could remember it though not when or where) and with the same effortlessness his father swung the rug up in front of him. Now in the starlight they retraced the afternoon's path, up the dusty road rife with honeysuckle, through the gate and up the black tunnel of the drive to the lightless house, where he sat on the mule and felt the rough warp of the rug drag across his thighs and vanish.

"Don't you want me to help?" he whispered. His father did not answer and now he heard again that stiff foot striking the hollow portico with that wooden and clocklike deliberation, that outrageous overstatement of the weight it carried. The rug, hunched, not flung (the boy could tell that even in the darkness) from his father's shoulder struck the angle of wall and floor with a sound unbelievably loud, thunderous, then the foot again, unhurried and enormous; a light came on in the house and the boy sat, tense, breathing steadily and quietly and just a little fast, though the foot itself did not increase its beat at all, descending the steps now; now the boy could see him.

"Don't you want to ride now?" he whispered. "We kin both ride now," the light within the house altering now, flaring up and sinking. *He's coming down the stairs now*, he thought. He had already ridden the mule up beside the horse block; presently his father was up behind him and he doubled the reins over and slashed the mule across the neck, but before the animal could begin to trot the hard, thin arm came round him, the hard, knotted hand jerking the mule back to a walk.

In the first red rays of the sun they were in the lot, putting plow gear on the mules. This time the sorrel mare was in the lot before he heard it at all, the rider collarless and even bareheaded, trembling, speaking in a shaking voice as the woman in the house had done, his father merely looking up once before stooping again to the hame he was buckling, so that the man on the mare spoke to his stooping back:

"You must realize you have ruined that rug. Wasn't there anybody here, any of your women . . ." he ceased, shaking, the boy watching him, the older brother leaning now in the stable door, chewing, blinking slowly and steadily at nothing apparently. "It cost a hundred dollars. But you never had a hundred dollars. You never will. So I'm going to charge you twenty bushels of corn against your crop. I'll add it in your contract and when you come to the commissary you can sign it. That won't keep Mrs. de Spain quiet but maybe it will teach you to wipe your feet off before you enter her house again."

Then he was gone. The boy looked at his father, who still had not spoken or even looked up again, who was now adjusting the logger-head in the hame.

"Pap," he said. His father looked at him — the inscrutable face, the shaggy

brows beneath which the gray eyes glinted coldly. Suddenly the boy went toward him, fast, stopping as suddenly. "You done the best you could!" he cried. "If he wanted hit done different why didn't he wait and tell you how? He won't git no twenty bushels! He won't git none! We'll gether hit and hide hit! I kin watch . . ."

"Did you put the cutter back in that straight stock like I told you?"

"No, sir," he said.

"Then go do it."

That was Wednesday. During the rest of that week he worked steadily, at what was within his scope and some which was beyond it, with an industry that did not need to be driven nor even commanded twice; he had this from his mother, with the difference that some at least of what he did he liked to do, such as splitting wood with the half-size axe which his mother and aunt had earned, or saved money somehow, to present him with at Christmas. In company with the older women (and on one afternoon, even one of the sisters), he built pens for the shoat and the cow which were a part of his father's contract with the landlord, and one afternoon, his father being absent, gone somewhere on one of the mules, he went to the field.

They were running a middle buster now, his brother holding the plow straight while he handled the reins, and walking beside the straining mule, the rich black soil shearing cool and damp against his bare ankles, he thought *Maybe this is the end of it. Maybe even that twenty bushels that seems hard to have to pay for just a rug will be a cheap price for him to stop forever and always from being what he used to be; thinking, dreaming now, so that his brother had to speak sharply to him to mind the mule: Maybe he even won't collect the twenty bushels. Maybe it will all add up and balance and vanish — corn, rug, fire; the terror and grief, the being pulled two ways like between two teams of horses — gone, done with for ever and ever.*

Then it was Saturday; he looked up from beneath the mule he was harnessing and saw his father in the black coat and hat. "Not that," his father said. "The wagon gear." And then, two hours later, sitting in the wagon bed behind his father and brother on the seat, the wagon accomplished a final curve, and he saw the weathered paintless store with its tattered tobacco- and patent-medicine posters and the tethered wagons and saddle animals below the gallery. He mounted the gnawed steps behind his father and brother, and there again was the lane of quiet, watching faces for the three of them to walk through. He saw the man in spectacles sitting at the plank table and he did not need to be told this was a Justice of the Peace; he sent one glare of fierce, exultant, partisan defiance at the man in collar and cravat now, whom he had seen but twice before in his life, and that on a galloping horse, who now wore on his face an expression not of rage but of amazed unbelief which the boy could not have known was at the incredible circumstance of being sued by one of his own tenants, and came

and stood against his father and cried at the Justice: "He ain't done it! He ain't burnt . . ."

"Go back to the wagon," his father said.

"Burnt?" the Justice said. "Do I understand this rug was burned too?"

"Does anybody here claim it was?" his father said. "Go back to the wagon." But he did not, he merely retreated to the rear of the room, crowded as that other had been, but not to sit down this time, instead, to stand pressing among the motionless bodies, listening to the voices:

"And you claim twenty bushels of corn is too high for the damage you did to the rug?"

"He brought the rug to me and said he wanted the tracks washed out of it. I washed the tracks out and took the rug back to him."

"But you didn't carry the rug back to him in the same condition it was in before you made the tracks on it."

His father did not answer, and now for perhaps half a minute there was no sound at all save that of breathing, the faint, steady suspiration of complete and intent listening.

"You decline to answer that, Mr. Snopes?" Again his father did not answer. "I'm going to find against you, Mr. Snopes. I'm going to find that you were responsible for the injury to Major de Spain's rug and hold you liable for it. But twenty bushels of corn seems a little high for a man in your circumstances to have to pay. Major de Spain claims it cost a hundred dollars. October corn will be worth about fifty cents. I figure that if Major de Spain can stand a ninety-five dollar loss on something he paid cash for, you can stand a five-dollar loss you haven't earned yet. I hold you in damages to Major de Spain to the amount of ten bushels of corn over and above your contract with him, to be paid to him out of your crop at gathering time. Court adjourned."

It had taken no time hardly, the morning was but half begun. He thought they would return home and perhaps back to the field, since they were late, far behind all other farmers. But instead his father passed on behind the wagon, merely indicating with his hand for the older brother to follow with it, and crossed the road toward the blacksmith shop opposite, pressing on after his father, overtaking him, speaking, whispering up at the harsh, calm face beneath the weathered hat: "He won't git no ten bushels neither. He won't git one. We'll . . ." until his father glanced for an instant down at him, the face absolutely calm, the grizzled eyebrows tangled above the cold eyes, the voice almost pleasant, almost gentle:

"You think so? Well, we'll wait till October anyway."

The matter of the wagon — the setting of a spoke or two and the tightening of the tires — did not take long either, the business of the tires accomplished by driving the wagon into the spring branch behind the shop and letting it stand there, the mules nuzzling into the water from time to time, and the boy on the



seat with the idle reins, looking up the slope and through the sooty tunnel of the shed where the slow hammer rang and where his father sat on an upended cypress bolt, easily, either talking or listening, still sitting there when the boy brought the dripping wagon up out of the branch and halted it before the door.

"Take them on to the shade and hitch," his father said. He did so and returned. His father and the smith and a third man squatting on his heels inside the door were talking, about crops and animals; the boy, squatting too in the ammoniac dust and hoof-parings and scales of rust, heard his father tell a long and unhurried story out of the time before the birth of the older brother even when he had been a professional horsetrader. And then his father came up beside him where he stood before a tattered last year's circus poster on the other side of the store, gazing rapt and quiet at the scarlet horses, the incredible poisons and convolutions of tulle and tights and the painted leers of comedians, and said, "It's time to eat."

But not at home. Squatting beside his brother against the front wall, he watched his father emerge from the store and produce from a paper sack a segment of cheese and divide it carefully and deliberately into three with his pocket knife and produce crackers from the same sack. They all three squatted on the gallery and ate, slowly, without talking; then in the store again, they drank from a tin dipper tepid water smelling of the cedar bucket and of living beech trees. And still they did not go home. It was a horse lot this time, a tall rail fence upon and along which men stood and sat and out of which one by one horses were led, to be walked and trotted and then cantered back and forth along the road while the slow swapping and buying went on and the sun began to slant westward, they — the three of them — watching and listening, the older brother with his muddy eyes and his steady, inevitable tobacco, the father commenting now and then on certain of the animals, to no one in particular.

It was after sundown when they reached home. They ate supper by lamp-light, then, sitting on the doorstep, the boy watched the night fully accomplish, listening to the whippoorwills and the frogs, when he heard his mother's voice: "Abner! No! No! Oh, God. Oh, God. Abner!" and he rose, whirled, and saw the altered light through the door where a candle stub now burned in a bottle-neck on the table and his father, still in the hat and coat, at once formal and burlesque as though dressed carefully for some shabby and ceremonial violence, emptying the reservoir of the lamp back into the five-gallon kerosene can from which it had been filled, while the mother tugged at his arm until he shifted the lamp to the other hand and flung her back, not savagely or viciously, just hard, into the wall, her hands flung out against the wall for balance, her mouth open and in her face the same quality of hopeless despair as had been in her voice. Then his father saw him standing in the door.

"Go to the barn and get that can of oil we were oiling the wagon with," he said. The boy did not move. Then he could speak.

"What . . ." he cried. "What are you . . ."

"Go get that oil," his father said. "Go."

Then he was moving, running, outside the house, toward the stable: this the old habit, the old blood which he had not been permitted to choose for himself, which had been bequeathed him willy nilly and which had run for so long (and who knew where, battenning on what of outrage and savagery and lust) before it came to him. *I could keep on*, he thought. *I could run on and on and never look back, never need to see his face again. Only I can't. I can't*, the rusted can in his hand now, the liquid splashing in it as he ran back to the house and into it, into the sound of his mother's weeping in the next room, and handed the can to his father.

"Ain't you going to even send a nigger?" he cried. "At least you sent a nigger before!"

This time his father didn't strike him. The hand came even faster than the blow had, the same hand which had set the can on the table with almost excruciating care flashing from the can toward him too quick for him to follow it, gripping him by the back of his shirt and on to tiptoe before he had seen it quit the can, the face stooping at him in breathless and frozen ferocity, the cold, dead voice speaking over him to the older brother who leaned against the table, chewing with that steady, curious, sidewise motion of cows.

"Empty the can into the big one and go on. I'll catch up with you."

"Better tie him up to the bedpost," the brother said.

"Do like I told you," the father said. Then the boy was moving, his bunched shirt and the hard, bony hand between his shoulder-blades, his toes just touching the floor, across the room and into the other one, past the sisters sitting with spread heavy thighs in the two chairs over the cold hearth, and to where his mother and aunt sat side by side on the bed, the aunt's arms about his mother's shoulders.

"Hold him," the father said. The aunt made a startled movement. "Not you," the father said. "Lennie. Take hold of him. I want to see you do it." His mother took him by the wrist. "You'll hold him better than that. If he gets loose don't you know what he is going to do? He will go up yonder." He jerked his head toward the road. "Maybe I'd better tie him."

"I'll hold him," his mother whispered.

"See you do then." Then his father was gone, the stiff foot heavy and measured upon the boards, ceasing at last.

Then he began to struggle. His mother caught him in both arms, he jerking and wrenching at them. He would be stronger in the end, he knew that. But he had no time to wait for it. "Lemme go!" he cried. "I don't want to have to hit you!"

"Let him go!" the aunt said. "If he don't go, before God, I am going up there myself!"

"Don't you see I can't?" his mother cried. "Sarty! Sarty! No! No! Help me, Lizzie!"

Then he was free. His aunt grasped at him but it was too late. He whirled, running, his mother stumbled forward on her knees behind him, crying to the nearer sister: "Catch him, Net! Catch him!" But that was too late too, the sister (the sisters were twins, born at the same time, yet either of them now gave the impression of being, encompassing as much living meat and volume and weight as any other two of the family) not yet having begun to rise from the chair, her head, face, alone merely turned, presenting to him in the flying instant an astonishing expanse of young female features untroubled by any surprise even, wearing only an expression of bovine interest. Then he was out of the room, out of the house, in the mild dust of the starlit road and the heavy ripeness of honeysuckle, the pale ribbon unspooling with terrific slowness under his running feet, reaching the gate at last and turning in, running, his heart and lungs drumming, on up the drive toward the lighted house, the lighted door. He did not knock, he burst in, sobbing for breath, incapable for the moment of speech; he saw the astonished face of the Negro in the linen jacket without knowing when the Negro had appeared.

"De Spain!" he cried, panted. "Where's . . ." then he saw the white man too emerging from a white door down the hall. "Barn!" he cried. "Barn!"

"What?" the white man said. "Barn?"

"Yes!" the boy cried. "Barn!"

"Catch him!" the white man shouted.

But it was too late this time too. The Negro grasped his shirt, but the entire sleeve, rotten with washing, carried away, and he was out that door too and in the drive again, and had actually never ceased to run even while he was screaming into the white man's face.

Behind him the white man was shouting, "My horse! Fetch my horse!" and he thought for an instant of cutting across the park and climbing the fence into the road, but he did not know the park nor how high the vine-massed fence might be and he dared not risk it. So he ran on down the drive, blood and breath roaring; presently he was in the road again though he could not see it. He could not hear either: the galloping mare was almost upon him before he heard her, and even then he held his course, as if the very urgency of his wild grief and need must in a moment more find him wings, waiting until the ultimate instant to hurl himself aside and into the weed-choked roadside ditch as the horse thundered past and on, for an instant in furious silhouette against the stars, the tranquil early summer night sky which, even before the shape of the horse and rider vanished, stained abruptly and violently upward: a long, swirling roar incredible and soundless, blotting the stars, and he springing up and into the road again, running again, knowing it was too late yet still running even after he heard the shot and, an instant later, two shots, pausing now without knowing

he had ceased to run, crying "Pap! Pap!", running again before he knew he had begun to run, stumbling, tripping over something and scrabbling up again without ceasing to run, looking backward over his shoulder at the glare as he got up, running on among the invisible trees, panting, sobbing, "Father! Father!"

At midnight he was sitting on the crest of a hill. He did not know it was midnight and he did not know how far he had come. But there was no glare behind him now and he sat now, his back toward what he had called home for four days anyhow, his face toward the dark woods which he would enter when breath was strong again, small, shaking steadily in the chill darkness, hugging himself into the remainder of his thin, rotten shirt, the grief and despair now no longer terror and fear but just grief and despair. *Father. My father*, he thought. "He was brave!" he cried suddenly, aloud but not loud, no more than a whisper: "He was! He was in the war! He was in Colonel Sartoris' cav'ry!" not knowing that his father had gone to that war a private in the fine old European sense, wearing no uniform, admitting the authority of and giving fidelity to no man or army or flag, going to war as Malbrouck himself did: for booty — it meant nothing and less than nothing to him if it were enemy booty or his own.

The slow constellations wheeled on. It would be dawn and then sun-up after a while and he would be hungry. But that would be to-morrow and now he was only cold, and walking would cure that. His breathing was easier now and he decided to get up and go on, and then he found that he had been asleep because he knew it was almost dawn, the night almost over. He could tell that from the whippoorwills. They were everywhere now among the dark trees below him, constant and inflectioned and ceaseless, so that, as the instant for giving over to the day birds drew nearer and nearer, there was no interval at all between them. He got up. He was a little stiff, but walking would cure that too as it would the cold, and soon there would be the sun. He went on down the hill, toward the dark woods within which the liquid silver voices of the birds called unceasing — the rapid and urgent beating of the urgent and quiring heart of the late spring night. He did not look back.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What characteristic in Snopes impressed strangers favorably? What physical trait is emphasized? What qualities did the boy inherit from his mother?
2. Compare Faulkner's characterization of a major character, the boy, with that of the minor characters, his sisters.
3. Are you satisfied with the motivation of Snopes' actions?
4. In what ways does the first episode make the conclusion of the story more convincing?
5. What would this story gain, or lose, if told from Snopes' point of view? from Major de Spain's? from Mrs. Snopes'?

Stephen Vincent Benét

## The Devil and Daniel Webster

*Stephen Vincent Benét, poet and short story writer, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his Civil War epic, John Brown's Body (1928). He published his first book when he was seventeen years old, received his B.A. and M.A. from Yale (submitting a volume of original poetry in place of a thesis for the M.A.), and studied later at the Sorbonne in Paris. His stories, collected in Thirteen O'Clock (1937) and Tales Before Midnight (1939), reflect his interest in history and folklore, also a "moving realism" and "deep understanding of youth." American literature suffered through his early death in 1943.*

It's a story they tell in the border country, where Massachusetts joins Vermont and New Hampshire.

Yes, Dan'l Webster's dead — or, at least, they buried him. But every time there's a thunderstorm around Marshfield, they say you can hear his rolling voice in the hollows of the sky. And they say that if you go to his grave and speak loud and clear, "Dan'l Webster — Dan'l Webster!" the ground'll begin to shiver and the trees begin to shake. And after a while you'll hear a deep voice saying, "Neighbor, how stands the Union?" Then you better answer the Union stands as she stood, rock-bottomed and copper-sheathed, one and indivisible, or he's liable to rear right out of the ground. At least, that's what I was told when I was a youngster.

You see, for a while, he was the biggest man in the country. He never got to be President, but he was the biggest man. There were thousands that trusted in him right next to God Almighty, and they told stories about him and all the things that belonged to him that were like the stories of patriarchs and such. They said, when he stood up to speak, stars and stripes came right out in the sky, and once he spoke against a river and made it sink into the ground. They said, when he walked the woods with his fishing rod, Killall, the trout would jump out of the streams right into his pockets, for they knew it was no use putting up a fight against him; and, when he argued a case, he could turn on the harps of the blessed and the shaking of the earth underground. That was the kind of man he was, and his big farm up at Marshfield was suitable to him. The chickens he raised were all white meat down through the drumsticks, the cows were tended like children, and the big ram he called Goliath had horns with a curl like a morning-glory vine and could butt through an iron door. But Dan'l wasn't one of your gentlemen farmers; he knew all the ways of the land, and he'd be up by candlelight to see that the chores got done. A man with

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a mouth like a mastiff, a brow like a mountain and eyes like burning anthracite — that was Dan'l Webster in his prime. And the biggest case he argued never got written down in the books, for he argued it against the devil, nip and tuck, and no holds barred. And this is the way I used to hear it told.

There was a man named Jabez Stone, lived at Cross Corners, New Hampshire. He wasn't a bad man to start with, but he was an unlucky man. If he planted corn, he got borers; if he planted potatoes, he got blight. He had good-enough land, but it didn't prosper him; he had a decent wife and children, but the more children he had, the less there was to feed them. If stones cropped up in his neighbor's field, boulders boiled up in his; if he had a horse with the spavins, he'd trade it for one with the staggers and give something extra. There's some folks bound to be like that, apparently. But one day Jabez Stone got sick of the whole business.

He'd been plowing that morning and he'd just broke the plowshare on a rock that he could have sworn hadn't been there yesterday. And, as he stood looking at the plowshare, the off horse began to cough — that ropy kind of cough that means sickness and horse doctors. There were two children down with the measles, his wife was ailing, and he had a whitlow on his thumb. It was about the last straw for Jabez Stone. "I vow," he said, and he looked around him kind of desperate — "I vow it's enough to make a man want to sell his soul to the devil! And I would, too, for two cents!"

Then he felt a kind of queerness come over him at having said what he'd said; though, naturally, being a New Hampshireman, he wouldn't take it back. But, all the same, when it got to be evening and, as far as he could see, no notice had been taken, he felt relieved in his mind, for he was a religious man. But notice is always taken, sooner or later, just like the Good Book says. And, sure enough, next day, about suppertime, a soft-spoken, dark-dressed stranger drove up in a handsome buggy and asked for Jabez Stone.

Well, Jabez told his family it was a lawyer, come to see him about a legacy. But he knew who it was. He didn't like the looks of the stranger, nor the way he smiled with his teeth. They were white teeth, and plentiful — some say they were filed to a point, but I wouldn't vouch for that. And he didn't like it when the dog took one look at the stranger and ran away howling, with his tail between his legs. But having passed his word, more or less, he stuck to it, and they went out behind the barn and made their bargain. Jabez Stone had to prick his finger to sign, and the stranger lent him a silver pin. The wound healed clean, but it left a little white scar.

After that, all of a sudden, things began to pick up and prosper for Jabez Stone. His cows got fat and his horses sleek, his crops were the envy of the neighborhood, and lightning might strike all over the valley, but it wouldn't strike his barn. Pretty soon, he was one of the prosperous people of the country; they asked him to stand for selectman, and he stood for it; there began to be talk of

running him for state senate. All in all, you might say the Stone family was as happy and contented as cats in a dairy. And so they were, except for Jabez Stone.

He'd been contented enough, the first few years. It's a great thing when bad luck turns; it drives most other things out of your head. True, every now and then, especially in rainy weather, the little white scar on his finger would give him a twinge. And once a year, punctual as clockwork, the stranger with the handsome buggy would come driving by. But the sixth year, the stranger lighted and, after that, his peace was over for Jabez Stone.

The stranger came up through the lower field, switching his boots with a cane — they were handsome black boots, but Jabez Stone never liked the look of them, particularly the toes. And, after he'd passed the time of day, he said, "Well, Mr. Stone, you're a hummer! It's a very pretty property you've got here, Mr. Stone."

"Well, some might favor it and others might not," said Jabez Stone, for he was a New Hampshireman.

"Oh, no need to decry your industry!" said the stranger, very easy, showing his teeth in a smile. "After all, we know what's been done, and it's been according to contract and specifications. So when — ahem — the mortgage falls due next year, you shouldn't have any regrets."

"Speaking of that mortgage, mister," said Jabez Stone, and he looked around for help to the earth and the sky, "I'm beginning to have one or two doubts about it."

"Doubts?" said the stranger, not quite so pleasantly.

"Why, yes," said Jabez Stone. "This being the U. S. A. and me always having been a religious man." He cleared his throat and got bolder. "Yes, sir," he said, "I'm beginning to have considerable doubts as to that mortgage holding in court."

"There's courts and courts," said the stranger, clicking his teeth. "Still, we might as well have a look at the original document." And he hauled out a big black pocketbook, full of papers. "Sherman, Slater, Stevens, Stone," he muttered. "I, Jabez Stone, for a term of seven years — Oh, it's quite in order, I think."

But Jabez Stone wasn't listening, for he saw something else flutter out of the black pocketbook. It was something that looked like a moth, but it wasn't a moth. And as Jabez Stone stared at it, it seemed to speak to him in a small sort of piping voice, terrible small and thin, but terrible human. "Neighbor Stone!" he squeaked. "Neighbor Stone! Help me! For God's sake, help me!"

But before Jabez Stone could stir hand or foot, the stranger whipped out a bandanna handkerchief, caught the creature in it, just like a butterfly, and started tying up the ends of the bandanna.

"Sorry for the interruption," he said. "As I was saying —"

But Jabez Stone was shaking all over like a scared horse.

"That's Miser Stevens' voice!" he said, in a croak. "And you've got him in your handkerchief!"

The stranger looked a little embarrassed.

"Yes, I really should have transferred him to the collecting box," he said with a simper, "but there were some rather unusual specimens there and I didn't want them crowded. Well, well, these little contretemps will occur."

"I don't know what you mean by contertan," said Jabez Stone, "but that was Miser Stevens' voice! And he ain't dead! You can't tell me he is! He was just as spry and mean as a woodchuck, Tuesday!"

"In the midst of life —" said the stranger, kind of pious. "Listen!" Then a bell began to toll in the valley and Jabez Stone listened, with the sweat running down his face. For he knew it was tolled for Miser Stevens and that he was dead.

"These long-standing accounts," said the stranger with a sigh; "one really hates to close them. But business is business."

He still had the bandanna in his hand, and Jabez Stone felt sick as he saw the cloth struggle and flutter.

"Are they all as small as that?" he asked hoarsely.

"Small?" said the stranger. "Oh, I see what you mean. Why, they vary." He measured Jabez Stone with his eyes, and his teeth showed. "Don't worry, Mr. Stone," he said. "You'll go with a very good grade. I wouldn't trust you outside the collecting box. Now, a man like Dan'l Webster, of course — well, we'd have to build a special box for him, and even at that, I imagine the wing spread would astonish you. He'd certainly be a prize. I wish we could see our way clear to him. But, in your case, as I was saying —"

"Put that handkerchief away!" said Jabez Stone, and he began to beg and to pray. But the best he could get at the end was a three years' extension, with conditions.

But till you make a bargain like that, you've got no idea of how fast four years can run. By the last months of these years, Jabez Stone's known all over the state and there's talk of running him for governor — and it's dust and ashes in his mouth. For every day, when he gets up, he thinks, "There's one more night gone," and every night when he lies down, he thinks of the black pocket-book and the soul of Miser Stevens, and it makes him sick at heart. Till, finally, he can't bear it any longer, and, in the last days of the last year, he hitches up his horse and drives off to seek Dan'l Webster. For Dan'l was born in New Hampshire, only a few miles from Cross Corners, and it's well known that he has a particular soft spot for old neighbors.

It was early in the morning when he got to Marshfield, but Dan'l was up already, talking Latin to the farm hands and wrestling with the ram, Goliath, and trying out a new trotter and working up speeches to make against John C. Calhoun. But when he heard a New Hampshireman had come to see him, he



dropped everything else he was doing, for that was Dan'l's way. He gave Jabez Stone a breakfast that five men couldn't eat, went into the living history of every man and woman in Cross Corners, and finally asked him how he could serve him.

Jabez Stone allowed that it was a kind of mortgage case.

"Well, I haven't pleaded a mortgage case in a long time, and I don't generally plead now, except before the Supreme Court," said Dan'l, "but if I can, I'll help you."

"Then I've got hope for the first time in ten years," said Jabez Stone, and told him the details.

Dan'l walked up and down as he listened, hands behind his back, now and then asking a question, now and then plunging his eyes at the floor, as if they'd bore through it like gimlets. When Jabez Stone had finished, Dan'l puffed out his cheeks and blew. Then he turned to Jabez Stone and a smile broke over his face like the sunrise over Monadnock.

"You've certainly given yourself the devil's own row to hoe, Neighbor Stone," he said, "but I'll take your case."

"You'll take it?" said Jabez Stone, hardly daring to believe.

"Yes," said Dan'l Webster. "I've got about seventy-five other things to do and the Missouri Compromise to straighten out, but I'll take your case. For if two New Hampshiremen aren't a match for the devil, we might as well give the country back to the Indians."

Then he shook Jabez Stone by the hand and said, "Did you come down here in a hurry?"

"Well, I admit I made time," said Jabez Stone.

"You'll go back faster," said Dan'l Webster, and he told 'em to hitch up Constitution and Constellation to the carriage. They were matched grays with one white forefoot, and they stepped like greased lightning.

Well, I won't describe how excited and pleased the whole Stone family was to have the great Dan'l Webster for a guest, when they finally got there. Jabez Stone had lost his hat on the way, blown off when they overtook a wind, but he didn't take much account of that. But after supper he sent the family off to bed, for he had most particular business with Mr. Webster. Mrs. Stone wanted them to sit in the front parlor, but Dan'l Webster knew front parlors and said he preferred the kitchen. So it was there they sat, waiting for the stranger, with a jug on the table between them and a bright fire on the hearth — the stranger being scheduled to show up on the stroke of midnight, according to specification.

Well, most men wouldn't have asked for better company than Dan'l Webster and a jug. But with every tick of the clock Jabez Stone got sadder and sadder. His eyes roved round, and though he sampled the jug, you could see he couldn't taste it. Finally, on the stroke of 11:30, he reached over and grabbed Dan'l Webster by the arm.

"Mr. Webster, Mr. Webster!" he said, and his voice was shaking with fear and a desperate courage. "For God's sake, Mr. Webster, harness your horses and get away from this place while you can!"

"You've brought me a long way, neighbor, to tell me you don't like my company," said Dan'l Webster, quite peaceable, pulling at the jug.

"Miserable wretch that I am!" groaned Jabez Stone. "I've brought you a devilish way, and now I see my folly. Let him take me if he wills. I don't hanker after it, I must say, but I can stand it. But you're the Union's stay and New Hampshire's pride! He mustn't get you, Mr. Webster! He mustn't get you!"

Dan'l Webster looked at the distracted man, all gray and shaking in the firelight, and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"I'm obliged to you, Neighbor Stone," he said gently. "It's kindly thought of. But there's a jug on the table and a case in hand. And I never left a jug or a case half finished in my life."

And just at that moment there was a sharp rap on the door.

"Ah," said Dan'l Webster, very coolly, "I thought your clock was a trifle slow, Neighbor Stone." He stepped to the door and opened it. "Come in!" he said.

The stranger came in — very dark and tall he looked in the firelight. He was carrying a box under his arm — a black, japanned box with little air holes in the lid.

At the sight of the box, Jabez Stone gave a low cry and shrank into a corner of the room.

"Mr. Webster, I presume," said the stranger, very polite, but with his eyes glowing like a fox's deep in the woods.

"Attorney of record for Jabez Stone," said Dan'l Webster, but his eyes were glowing too. "Might I ask your name?"

"I've gone by a good many," said the stranger carelessly. "Perhaps Scratch will do for the evening. I'm often called that in these regions."

Then he sat down at the table and poured himself a drink from the jug. The liquor was cold in the jug, but it came steaming into the glass.

"And now," said the stranger, smiling and showing his teeth, "I shall call upon you, as a law-abiding citizen, to assist me in taking possession of my property."

Well, with that the argument began — and it went hot and heavy. At first Jabez Stone had a flicker of hope, but when he saw Dan'l Webster being forced back at point after point, he just sat scrunched in his corner, with his eyes on that japanned box. For there wasn't any doubt as to the deed or the signature — that was the worst of it. Dan'l Webster twisted and turned and thumped his fist on the table, but he couldn't get away from that. He offered to compromise the case; the stranger wouldn't hear of it. He pointed out the property had increased in value, and state senators ought to be worth more; the stranger stuck

to the letter of the law. He was a great lawyer, Dan'l Webster, but we know who's the King of Lawyers, as the Good Book tells us, and it seemed as if, for the first time, Dan'l Webster had met his match.

Finally, the stranger yawned a little. "Your spirited efforts on behalf of your client do you credit, Mr. Webster," he said, "but if you have no more arguments to adduce, I'm rather pressed for time —" and Jabez Stone shuddered.

Dan'l Webster's brow looked dark as a thundercloud.

"Pressed or not, you shall not have this man!" he thundered. "Mr. Stone is an American citizen, and no American citizen may be forced into the service of a foreign prince. We fought England for that in '12 and we'll fight all hell for it again!"

"Foreign?" said the stranger. "And who calls me a foreigner?"

"Well, I never yet heard of the dev — of your claiming American citizenship," said Dan'l Webster, with surprise.

"And who with better right?" said the stranger, with one of his terrible smiles. "When the first wrong was done to the first Indian, I was there. When the first slaver put out for the Congo, I stood on her deck. Am I not in your books and stories and beliefs, from the first settlements on? Am I not spoken of, still, in every church in New England? 'Tis true the North claims me for a Southerner and the South for a Northerner, but I am neither. I am merely an honest American like yourself — and of the best descent — for, to tell the truth, Mr. Webster, though I don't like to boast of it, my name is older in this country than yours."

"Aha!" said Dan'l Webster, with the veins standing out in his forehead. "Then I stand on the Constitution! I demand a trial for my client!"

"The case is hardly one for an ordinary court," said the stranger, his eyes flickering. "And, indeed, the lateness of the hour —"

"Let it be any court you choose, so it is an American judge and an American jury!" said Dan'l Webster in his pride. "Let it be the quick or the dead; I'll abide the issue!"

"You have said it," said the stranger, and pointed his finger at the door. And with that, and all of a sudden, there was a rushing of wind outside and a noise of footsteps. They came, clear and distinct, through the night. And yet, they were not like the footsteps of living men.

"In God's name, who comes by so late?" cried Jabez Stone, in an ague of fear.

"The jury Mr. Webster demands," said the stranger, sipping at his boiling glass. "You must pardon the rough appearance of one or two; they will have come a long way."

And with that the fire burned blue and the door blew open and twelve men entered, one by one.

If Jabez Stone had been sick with terror before, he was blind with terror now. For there was Walter Butler, the loyalist, who spread fire and horror through

the Mohawk Valley in the times of the Revolution; and there was Simon Girty, the renegade, who saw white men burned at the stake and whooped with the Indians to see them burn. His eyes were green, like a catamount's, and the stains on his hunting shirt did not come from the blood of the deer. King Philip was there, wild and proud as he had been in life, with the great gash in his head that gave him his death wound, and cruel Governor Dale, who broke men on the wheel. There was Morton of Merry Mount, who so vexed the Plymouth Colony, with his flushed, loose, handsome face and his hate of the godly. There was Teach, the bloody pirate, with his black beard curling on his breast. The Reverend John Smeet, with his strangler's hands and his Geneva gown, walked as daintily as he had to the gallows. The red print of the rope was still around his neck, but he carried a perfumed handkerchief in one hand. One and all, they came into the room with the fires of hell still upon them, and the stranger named their names and their deeds as they came, till the tale of twelve was told. Yet the stranger had told the truth — they had all played a part in America.

"Are you satisfied with the jury, Mr. Webster?" said the stranger mockingly, when they had taken their places.

The sweat stood upon Dan'l Webster's brow, but his voice was clear.

"Quite satisfied," he said. "Though I miss General Arnold from the company."

"Benedict Arnold is engaged upon other business," said the stranger, with a glower. "Ah, you asked for a justice, I believe."

He pointed his finger once more, and a tall man, soberly clad in Puritan garb, with the burning gaze of the fanatic, stalked into the room and took his judge's place.

"Justice Hathorne is a jurist of experience," said the stranger. "He presided at certain witch trials once held in Salem. There were others who repented of the business later, but not he."

"Repent of such notable wonders and undertakings?" said the stern old justice. "Nay, hang them — hang them all!" And he muttered to himself in a way that struck ice into the soul of Jabez Stone.

Then the trial began, and, as you might expect, it didn't look anyways good for the defense. And Jabez Stone didn't make much of a witness in his own behalf. He took one look at Simon Girty and screeched, and they had to put him back in his corner in a kind of swoon.

It didn't halt the trial, though; the trial went on, as trials do. Dan'l Webster had faced some hard juries and hanging judges in his time, but this was the hardest he'd ever faced, and he knew it. They sat there with a kind of glitter in their eyes, and the stranger's smooth voice went on and on. Every time he'd raise an objection, it'd be "Objection sustained," but whenever Dan'l objected, it'd be "Objection denied." Well, you couldn't expect fair play from a fellow like this Mr. Scratch.

It got to Dan'l in the end, and he began to heat, like iron in the forge. When he got up to speak, he was going to flay that stranger with every trick known to the law, and the judge and jury too. He didn't care if it was contempt of court or what would happen to him for it. He didn't care any more what happened to Jabez Stone. He just got madder and madder, thinking of what he'd say. And yet, curiously enough, the more he thought about it, the less he was able to arrange his speech in his mind.

Till, finally, it was time for him to get up on his feet, and he did so, all ready to bust out with lightnings and denunciations. But before he started he looked over the judge and jury for a moment, such being his custom. And he noticed the glitter in their eyes was twice as strong as before, and they all leaned forward. Like hounds just before they get the fox, they looked, and the blue mist of evil in the room thickened as he watched them. Then he saw what he'd been about to do, and he wiped his forehead, as a man might who's just escaped falling into a pit in the dark.

For it was him they'd come for, not only Jabez Stone. He read it in the glitter of their eyes and in the way the stranger hid his mouth with one hand. And if he fought them with their own weapons, he'd fall into their power; he knew that, though he couldn't have told you how. It was his own anger and horror that burned in their eyes; and he'd have to wipe that out or the case was lost. He stood there for a moment, his black eyes burning like anthracite. And then he began to speak.

He started off in a low voice, though you could hear every word. They say he could call on the harps of the blessed when he chose. And this was just as simple and easy as a man could talk. But he didn't start out by condemning or reviling. He was talking about the things that make a country a country, and a man a man.

And he began with the simple things that everybody's known and felt — the freshness of a fine morning when you're young, and the taste of food when you're hungry, and the new day that's every day when you're a child. He took them up and he turned them in his hands. They were good things for any man. But without freedom, they sickened. And when he talked of those enslaved, and the sorrows of slavery, his voice got like a big bell. He talked of the early days of America and the men who had made those days. It wasn't a spread-eagle speech, but he made you see it. He admitted all the wrong that had ever been done. But he showed how, out of the wrong and the right, the suffering and the starvations, something new had come. And everybody had played a part in it, even the traitors.

Then he turned to Jabez Stone, and showed him as he was — an ordinary man who'd had hard luck and wanted to change it. And, because he'd wanted to change it, now he was going to be punished for all eternity. And yet there was good in Jabez Stone, and he showed that good. He was hard and mean, in some

ways, but he was a man. There was sadness in being a man, but it was a proud thing too. And he showed what the pride of it was till you couldn't help feeling it. Yes, even in hell, if a man was a man, you'd know it. And he wasn't pleading for any one person any more, though his voice rang like an organ. He was telling the story and the failures and the endless journey of mankind. They got tricked and trapped and bamboozled, but it was a great journey. And no demon that was ever foaled could know the inwardness of it—it took a man to do that.

The fire began to die on the hearth and the wind before morning to blow. The light was getting gray in the room when Dan'l Webster finished. And his words came back at the end to New Hampshire ground, and the one spot of land that each man loves and clings to. He painted a picture of that, and to each one of that jury he spoke of things long forgotten. For his voice could search the heart, and that was his gift and his strength. And to one, his voice was like the forest and its secrecy, and to another like the sea and the storms of the sea; and one heard the cry of his lost nation in it, and another saw a little harmless scene he hadn't remembered for years. But each saw something. And when Dan'l Webster finished, he didn't know whether or not he'd saved Jabez Stone. But he knew he'd done a miracle. For the glitter was gone from the eyes of judge and jury, and, for the moment, they were men again, and knew they were men.

"The defense rests," said Dan'l Webster, and stood there like a mountain. His ears were still ringing with his speech, and he didn't hear anything else till he heard Judge Hathorne say, "The jury will retire to consider its verdict."

Walter Butler rose in his place and his face had a dark, gay pride on it.

"The jury has considered its verdict," he said, and looked the stranger full in the eye. "We find for the defendant, Jabez Stone."

With that, the smile left the stranger's face, but Walter Butler did not flinch.

"Perhaps 'tis not strictly in accordance with the evidence," he said, "but even the damned may salute the eloquence of Mr. Webster."

With that, the long crow of a rooster split the gray morning sky, and judge and jury were gone from the room like a puff of smoke and as if they had never been there. The stranger turned to Dan'l Webster, smiling wryly.

"Major Butler was always a bold man," he said. "I had not thought him quite so bold. Nevertheless, my congratulations, as between two gentlemen."

"I'll have that paper first, if you please," said Dan'l Webster, and he took it and tore it into four pieces. It was queerly warm to the touch. "And now," he said, "I'll have you!" and his hand came down like a bear trap on the stranger's arm. For he knew that once you bested anybody like Mr. Scratch in fair fight, his power on you was gone. And he could see that Mr. Scratch knew it too.

The stranger twisted and wriggled, but he couldn't get out of that grip. "Come, come, Mr. Webster," he said, smiling palely. "This sort of thing is

ridic — ouch! — is ridiculous. If you're worried about the costs of the case, naturally, I'd be glad to pay —"

"And so you shall!" said Dan'l Webster, shaking him till his teeth rattled. "For you'll sit right down at that table and draw up a document, promising never to bother Jabez Stone nor his heirs or assigns nor any other New Hampshireman till doomsday! For any hades we want to raise in this state, we can raise ourselves, without assistance from strangers."

"Ouch!" said the stranger. "Ouch! Well, they never did run very big to the barrel, but — ouch! — I agree!"

So he sat down and drew up the document. But Dan'l Webster kept his hand on his coat collar all the time.

"And, now, may I go?" said the stranger, quite humble, when Dan'l'd seen the document's in proper and legal form.

"Go?" said Dan'l, giving him another shake. "I'm still trying to figure out what I'll do with you. For you've settled the costs of the case, but you haven't settled with me. I think I'll take you back to Marshfield," he said, kind of reflective. "I've got a ram there named Goliath that can butt through an iron door. I'd kind of like to turn you loose in his field and see what he'd do."

Well, with that the stranger began to beg and to plead. And he begged and pled so humbly that, finally, Dan'l, who was naturally kindhearted, agreed to let him go. The stranger seemed terrible grateful for that and said, just to show they were friends, he'd tell Dan'l's fortune before leaving. So Dan'l agreed to that, though he didn't take much stock in fortune-tellers ordinarily. But, naturally, the stranger was a little different.

Well, he pried and he peered at the lines in Dan'l's hands. And he told him one thing and another that was quite remarkable. But they were all in the past.

"Yes, all that's true, and it happened," said Dan'l Webster. "But what's to come in the future?"

The stranger grinned, kind of happily, and shook his head.

"The future's not as you think it," he said. "It's dark. You have a great ambition, Mr. Webster."

"I have," said Dan'l firmly, for everybody knew he wanted to be President.

"It seems almost within your grasp," said the stranger, "but you will not attain it. Lesser men will be made President and you will be passed over."

"And, if I am, I'll still be Daniel Webster," said Dan'l. "Say on."

"You have two strong sons," said the stranger, shaking his head. "You look to found a line. But each will die in war and neither reach greatness."

"Live or die, they are still my sons," said Dan'l Webster. "Say on."

"You have made great speeches," said the stranger. "You will make more."

"Ah," said Dan'l Webster.

"But the last great speech you make will turn many of your own against you," said the stranger. "They will call you Ichabod; they will call you by other

names. Even in New England, some will say you have turned your coat and sold your country, and their voices will be loud against you till you die."

"So it is an honest speech, it does not matter what men say," said Dan'l Webster. Then he looked at the stranger and their glances locked.

"One question," he said. "I have fought for the Union all my life. Will I see that fight won against those who would tear it apart?"

"Not while you live," said the stranger, grimly, "but it will be won. And after you are dead, there are thousands who will fight for your cause, because of words that you spoke."

"Why, then, you long-barreled, slab-sided, lantern-jawed, fortune-telling note shaver!" said Dan'l Webster, with a great roar of laughter. "be off with you to your own place before I put my mark on you! For, by the thirteen original colonies, I'd go to the Pit itself to save the Union!"

And with that he drew back his foot for a kick that would have stunned a horse. It was only the tip of his shoe that caught the stranger, but he went flying out of the door with his collecting box under his arm.

"And now," said Dan'l Webster, seeing Jabez Stone beginning to rouse from his swoon, "let's see what's left in the jug, for it's dry work talking all night. I hope there's pie for breakfast, Neighbor Stone."

But they say that whenever the devil comes near Marshfield, even now, he gives it a wide berth. And he hasn't been seen in the state of New Hampshire from that day to this. I'm not talking about Massachusetts or Vermont.

#### QUESTIONS

1. How many years does Jabez have before the mortgage, with extension, falls due? What happened to Miser Stevens?
2. What noble offer does Jabez make just before the Devil comes for him?
3. At what point in the story is Daniel Webster in the greatest danger? List two arguments of his and two rebuttals by the Devil.
4. By what appeal does Webster win the case? Does he convince you?
5. What are the strong and weak points of this "tall tale"?
6. What was more important than anything else to Daniel Webster?



*Wilbur Daniel Steele, novelist and short story writer, spent much time abroad as a young man, and for a while prepared for a career in painting. After study at the University of Denver, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and art academies in Paris and New York, he turned to writing and won four O. Henry Committee prizes for his short stories, as well as a special award for maintaining the highest level of American short story writing between 1918 and 1921. "How Beautiful With Shoes," "Blue Murder," and "The Man Who Saw Through Heaven" are among his best-known stories.*

This is not an easy story; not a road for tender or for casual feet. Better the meadows. Let me warn you, it is as hard as that old man's soul and as sunless as his eyes. It has its inception in catastrophe, and its end in an act of almost incredible violence; between them it tells barely how one long blind can become also deaf and dumb.

He lived in one of those old Puritan sea towns where the strain has come down austere and moribund, so that his act would not be quite unbelievable. Except that the town is no longer Puritan and Yankee. It has been betrayed; it has become an outpost of the Portuguese islands.

This man, this blind cobbler himself, was a Portuguese from St. Michael, in the Western Islands, and his name was Boaz Negro.

He was happy. An unquenchable exuberance lived in him. When he arose in the morning he made vast, as it were uncontrollable, gestures with his stout arms. He came into his shop singing. His voice, strong and deep as the chest from which it emanated, rolled out through the doorway and along the street, and the fishermen, done with their morning work and lounging and smoking along the wharfs, said, "Boaz is to work already." Then they came up to sit in the shop.

In that town a cobbler's shop is a club. One sees the interior always dimly thronged. They sit on the benches watching the artisan at his work for hours, and they talk about everything in the world. A cobbler is known by the company he keeps.

Boaz Negro kept young company. He would have nothing to do with the old. On his own head the gray hairs set thickly.

He had a grown son. But the benches in his shop were for the lusty and valiant young, men who could spend the night drinking, and then at three o'clock in the morning turn out in the rain and dark to pull at the weirs, sing songs, buffet one another among the slippery fish in the boat's bottom, and

make loud jokes about the fundamental things, love and birth and death. Harkening to their boasts and strong prophecies his breast heaved and his heart beat faster. He was a large, full-blooded fellow, fashioned for exploits; the flame in his darkness burned higher even to hear of them.

It is scarcely conceivable how Boaz Negro could have come through this much of his life still possessed of that unquenchable and priceless exuberance; how he would sing in the dawn; how, simply listening to the recital of deeds in gale or brawl, he could easily forget himself a blind man, tied to a shop and a last; easily make of himself a lusty young fellow breasting the sunlit and adventurous tide of life.

He had had a wife, whom he had loved. Fate, which had scourged him with the initial scourge of blindness, had seen fit to take his Angelina away. He had had four sons. Three, one after another, had been removed, leaving only Manuel, the youngest. Recovering slowly, with agony, from each of these recurrent blows, his unquenchable exuberance had lived. And there was another thing quite as extraordinary. He had never done anything but work, and that sort of thing may kill the flame where an abrupt catastrophe fails. Work in the dark. Work, work, work! And accompanied by privation: an almost miserly scale of personal economy. Yes, indeed, he had "skinned his fingers," especially in the earlier years. When it tells most.

How he had worked! Not alone in the daytime, but also sometimes, when orders were heavy, far into the night. It was strange for one passing along that deserted street at midnight to hear issuing from the black shop of Boaz Negro the rhythmical tap-tap-tap of hammer on wooden peg.

Nor was that sound all: no man in town could get far past that shop in his nocturnal wandering unobserved. No more than a dozen footfalls, and from the darkness Boaz's voice rolled forth, fraternal, stentorian, "Good night, Antone!" "Good night to you, Caleb Snow!"

To Boaz Negro it was still broad day.

Now, because of this, he was what might be called a substantial man. He owned his place, his shop, opening on the sidewalk, and behind it the dwelling-house with trellised galleries upstairs and down.

And there was always something for his son, a "piece for the pocket," a dollar-, five-, even a ten-dollar bill if he had "got to have it." Manuel was "a good boy." Boaz not only said this; he felt that he was assured of it in his understanding, to the infinite peace of his heart.

It was curious that he should be ignorant only of the one nearest to him. Not because he was physically blind. Be certain he knew more of other men and of other men's sons than they or their neighbours did. More, that is to say, of their hearts, their understandings, their idiosyncrasies, and their ultimate weight in the balance-pan of eternity.

His simple explanation of Manuel was that Manuel "wasn't too stout."

To others he said this, and to himself. Manuel was not indeed too robust. How should he be vigorous when he never did anything to make him so? He never worked. Why should he work, when existence was provided for, and when there was always that "piece for the pocket"? Even a ten-dollar bill on a Saturday night! No, Manuel "wasn't too stout."

In the shop they let it go at that. The missteps and frailties of everyone else in the world were canvassed there with the most shameless publicity. But Boaz Negro was a blind man, and in a sense their host. Those reckless, strong young fellows respected and loved him. It was allowed to stand at that. Manuel was "a good boy." Which did not prevent them, by the way, from joining later in the general condemnation of that father's laxity — "the ruination of the boy!"

"He should have put him to work, that's what."

"He should have said to Manuel, 'Look here, if you want a dollar, go earn it first.' "

As a matter of fact, only one man ever gave Boaz the advice direct. That was Campbell Wood. And Wood never sat in that shop.

In every small town there is one young man who is spoken of as "rising." As often as not he is not a native, but "from away."

In this town Campbell Wood was that man. He had come from another part of the state to take a place in the bank. He lived in the upper story of Boaz Negro's house, the ground floor now doing for Boaz and the meagre remnant of his family. The old woman who came in to tidy up for the cobbler looked after Wood's rooms as well.

Dealing with Wood, one had first of all the sense of his incorruptibility. A little ruthless perhaps, as if one could imagine him, in defence of his integrity, cutting off his friend, cutting off his own hand, cutting off the very stream flowing out from the wellsprings of human kindness. An exaggeration, perhaps.

He was by long odds the most eligible young man in town; good looking in a spare, ruddy, sandy-haired Scottish fashion; important, incorruptible, "rising." But he took good care of his heart. Precisely that; like a sharp-eyed duenna to his own heart. One felt that here was the man, if ever was the man, who held his destiny in his own hand. Failing, of course, some quite gratuitous and unforeseeable catastrophe.

Not that he was not human, or even incapable of laughter or passion. He was, in a way, immensely accessible. He never clapped one on the shoulder; on the other hand, he never failed to speak. Not even to Boaz.

Returning from the bank in the afternoon, he had always a word for the cobbler. Passing out again to supper at his boarding-place, he had another, about the weather, the prospects of rain. And if Boaz were at work in the dark when he returned from an evening at the Board of Trade, there was a "Good night, Mr. Negro!"

On Boaz's part, his attitude toward his lodger was curious and paradoxical.

He did not pretend to anything less than reverence for the young man's position; precisely on account of that position he was conscious toward Wood of a vague distrust. This was because he was an uneducated fellow.

To the uneducated the idea of large finance is as uncomfortable as the idea of the law. It must be said for Boaz that, responsive to Wood's unfailing civility, he fought against this sensation of dim and somehow shameful distrust.

Nevertheless his whole parental soul was in arms that evening, when returning from the bank and finding the shop empty of loungers, Wood paused a moment to propose the bit of advice already referred to.

"Haven't you ever thought of having Manuel learn the trade?"

A suspicion, a kind of premonition, lighted the fires of defence.

"Shoemaking," said Boaz, "is good enough for a blind man."

"Oh, I don't know. At least it's better than doing nothing at all."

Boaz's hammer was still. He sat silent, monumental. Outwardly. For once his unfailing response had failed him, "Manuel ain't too stout, you know." Perhaps it had become suddenly inadequate.

He hated Wood; he despised Wood; more than ever before, a hundredfold more, quite abruptly, he distrusted Wood.

How could a man say such things as Wood had said? And where Manuel himself might hear!

Where Manuel *had* heard! Boaz's other emotions — hatred and contempt and distrust — were overshadowed. Sitting in darkness, no sound had come to his ears, no footfall, no infinitesimal creaking of a floor-plank. Yet by some sixth uncanny sense of the blind he was aware that Manuel was standing in the dusk of the entry joining the shop to the house.

Boaz made a Herculean effort. The voice came out of his throat, harsh, bitter, and loud enough to have carried ten times the distance to his son's ears.

"Manuel is a good boy!"

"Yes — h'm — yes — I suppose so."

Wood shifted his weight. He seemed uncomfortable.

"Well. I'll be running along, I — ugh! Heavens!"

Something was happening. Boaz heard exclamations, breathings, the rustle of sleeve-cloth in large, frantic, and futile graspings — all without understanding. Immediately there was an impact on the floor, and with it the unmistakable clink of metal. Boaz even heard that the metal was minted, and that the coins were gold. He understood. A coin-sack, gripped not quite carefully enough for a moment under the other's overcoat, had shifted, slipped, escaped, and fallen.

And Manuel had heard!

It was a dreadful moment for Boaz, dreadful in its native sense, as full of dread. Why? It was a moment of horrid revelation, ruthless clarification. His son, his link with the departed Angelina, that "good boy" — Manuel, standing

in the shadow of the entry, visible alone to the blind, had heard the clink of falling gold, and — *and Boaz wished that he had not!*

There, amazing, disconcerting, destroying, stood the sudden fact.

Sitting as impassive and monumental as ever, his strong, bleached hands at rest on his work, round drops of sweat came out on Boaz's forehead. He scarcely took the sense of what Wood was saying. Only fragments.

"Government money, understand — for the breakwater workings — huge — too many people know here, everywhere — don't trust the safe — tin safe — 'Noah's Ark' — give you my word — Heavens, no!"

It boiled down to this — the money, more money than was good for that antiquated "Noah's Ark" at the bank — and whose contemplated sojourn there overnight was public to too many minds — in short, Wood was not only incorruptible, he was canny. To what one of those minds, now, would it occur that he should take away that money bodily, under casual cover of his coat, to his own lodgings behind the cobbler-shop of Boaz Negro? For this one, this important night!

He was sorry the coin-sack had slipped, because he did not like to have the responsibility of secret sharer cast upon any one, even upon Boaz, even by accident. On the other hand, how tremendously fortunate that it had been Boaz and not another. So far as that went, Wood had no more anxiety now than before. One incorruptible knows another.

"I'd trust you, Mr. Negro" (that was one of the fragments which came and stuck in the cobbler's brain), "as far as I would myself. As long as it's only you, I'm just going up here and throw it under the bed. Oh, yes, certainly."

Boaz ate no supper. For the first time in his life food was dry in his gullet. Even under those other successive crushing blows of Fate the full and generous habit of his functionings had carried on unabated; he had always eaten what was set before him. To-night, over his untouched plate, he watched Manuel with his sightless eyes, keeping track of his every mouthful, word, intonation, breath. What profit he expected to extract from this catlike surveillance it is impossible to say.

When they arose from the supper-table Boaz made another Herculean effort. "Manuel, you're a good boy!"

The formula had a quality of appeal, of despair, and of command.

"Manuel, you should be short of money, maybe. Look, what's this? A tenner? Well, there's a piece for the pocket; go and enjoy yourself."

He would have been frightened had Manuel, upsetting tradition, declined the offering. With the morbid contrariness of the human imagination, the boy's avid grasping gave him no comfort.

He went out into the shop, where it was already dark, drew to him his last, his tools, mallets, cutters, pegs, leather. And having prepared to work, he remained idle. He found himself listening.

It has been observed that the large phenomena of sunlight and darkness were nothing to Boaz Negro. A busy night was broad day. Yet there was a difference; he knew it with the blind man's eyes, the ears.

Day was a vast confusion, or rather a wide fabric, of sounds; great and little sounds all woven together, voices, footfalls, wheels, far-off whistles and fog-horns, flies buzzing in the sun. Night was another thing. Still there were voices and footfalls, but rarer, emerging from the large, pure body of silence as definite, surprising, and yet familiar entities.

To-night there was an easterly wind, coming off the water and carrying the sound of waves. So far as other fugitive sounds were concerned it was the same as silence. The wind made little difference to the ears. It nullified, from one direction at least, the other two visual processes of the blind, the sense of touch and the sense of smell. It blew away from the shop, toward the living-house.

As has been said, Boaz found himself listening, scrutinizing with an extraordinary attention, this immense background of sound. He heard footfalls. The story of that night was written, for him, in footfalls.

He heard them moving about the house, the lower floor, prowling here, there, halting for long spaces, advancing, retreating softly on the planks. About this aimless, interminable perambulation there was something to twist the nerves, something led and at the same time driven like a succession of frail and indecisive charges.

Boaz lifted himself from his chair. All his impulse called him to make a stir, join battle, cast in the breach the reenforcement of his presence, authority, good will. He sank back again; his hands fell down. The curious impotence of the spectator held him.

He heard footfalls, too, on the upper floor, a little fainter, borne to the inner rather than the outer ear, along the solid causeway of partitions and floor, the legs of his chair, the bony framework of his body. Very faint indeed. Sinking back easily into the background of the wind. They, too, came and went, this room, that, to the passage, the stair-head, and away. About them too there was the same quality of being led and at the same time of being driven.

Time went by. In his darkness it seemed to Boaz that hours must have passed. He heard voices. Together with the footfalls, that abrupt, brief, and (in view of Wood's position) astounding interchange of sentences made up his history of the night. Wood must have opened the door at the head of the stair; by the sound of his voice he would be standing there, peering below perhaps; perhaps listening.

"What's wrong down there?" he called. "Why don't you go to bed?"

After a moment, came Manuel's voice, "Ain't sleepy."

"Neither am I. Look here, do you like to play cards?"

"What kind? Euchre! I like euchre all right. Or pitch."

"Well, what would you say to coming up and having a game of euchre then, Manuel? If you can't sleep?"

"That'd be all right."

The lower footfalls ascended to join the footfalls on the upper floor. There was the sound of a door closing.

Boaz sat still. In the gloom he might have been taken for a piece of furniture, of machinery, an extraordinary lay figure, perhaps, for the trying on of the boots he made. He seemed scarcely to breathe, only the sweat starting from his brow giving him an aspect of life.

He ought to have run, and leaped up that inner stair and pounded with his fists on that door. He seemed unable to move. At rare intervals feet passed on the sidewalk outside, just at his elbow, so to say, and yet somehow, to-night, immeasurably far away. Beyond the orbit of the moon. He heard Rugg, the policeman, noting the silence of the shop, muttering, "Boaz is to bed to-night," as he passed.

The wind increased. It poured against the shop with its deep, continuous sound of a river. Submerged in its body, Boaz caught the note of the town bell striking midnight.

Once more, after a long time, he heard footfalls. He heard them coming around the corner of the shop from the house, footfalls half swallowed by the wind, passing discreetly, without haste, retreating, merging step by step with the huge, incessant background of the wind.

Boaz's muscles tightened all over him. He had the impulse to start up, to fling open the door, shout into the night, "What are you doing? Stop there! Say! What are you doing and where are you going?"

And as before, the curious impotence of the spectator held him motionless. He had not stirred in his chair. And those footfalls, upon which hinged, as it were, that momentous decade of his life, were gone.

There was nothing to listen for now. Yet he continued to listen. Once or twice, half arousing himself, he drew toward him his unfinished work. And then relapsed into immobility.

As has been said, the wind, making little difference to the ears, made all the difference in the world with the sense of feeling and the sense of smell. From the one important direction of the house. That is how it could come about that Boaz Negro could sit, waiting and listening to nothing in the shop, and remain ignorant of disaster until the alarm had gone away and come back again, pounding, shouting, clanging.

"*Fire!*" he heard them bawling in the street. "*Fire! Fire!*"

Only slowly did he understand that the fire was in his own house.

There is nothing stiller in the world than the skeleton of a house in the dawn after a fire. It is as if everything living, positive, violent, had been completely drained in the one flaming act of violence, leaving nothing but negation till the end of time. It is worse than a tomb. A monstrous stillness! Even the footfalls

of the searchers can not disturb it, for they are separate and superficial. In its presence they are almost frivolous.

Half an hour after dawn the searchers found the body, if what was left from that consuming ordeal might be called a body. The discovery came as a shock. It seemed incredible that the occupant of that house, no cripple or invalid but an able man in the prime of youth, should not have awakened and made good his escape. It was the upper floor which had caught; the stairs had stood to the last. It was beyond calculation. Even if he had been asleep!

And he had not been asleep. This second and infinitely more appalling discovery began to be known. Slowly. By a hint, a breath of rumour here; there an allusion, half taken back. The man, whose incinerated body still lay curled in its bed of cinders, had been dressed at the moment of disaster; even to the watch, the cuff-buttons, the studs, the very scarf-pin. Fully clothed to the last detail, precisely as those who had dealings at the bank might have seen Campbell Wood any week-day morning for the past eight months. A man does not sleep with his clothes on. The skull of the man had been broken, as if with a blunt instrument of iron. On the charred lacework of the floor lay the leg of an old andiron with which Boaz Negro and his Angelina had set up housekeeping in that new house.

It needed only Mr. Asa Whitelaw, coming up the street from that gaping "Noah's Ark" at the bank, to round out the scandalous circle of circumstance.

"Where is Manuel?"

Boaz Negro still sat in his shop, impassive, monumental, his thick, hairy arms resting on the arms of his chair. The tools and materials of his work remained scattered about him, as his irresolute gathering of the night before had left them. Into his eyes no change could come. He had lost his house, the visible monument of all those years of "skinning his fingers." It would seem that he had lost his son. And he had lost something incalculably precious — that hitherto unquenchable exuberance of the man.

"Where is Manuel?"

When he spoke his voice was unaccented and stale, like the voice of a man already dead.

"Yes, where is Manuel?"

He had answered them with their own question.

"When did you last see him?"

Neither he nor they seemed to take note of that profound irony.

"At supper."

"Tell us, Boaz; you knew about this money?"

The cobbler nodded his head.

"And did Manuel?"

He might have taken sanctuary in a legal doubt. How did he know what Manuel knew? Precisely! As before, he nodded his head.



"After supper, Boaz, you were in the shop? But you heard something?"

He went on to tell them what he had heard: the footfalls, below and above, the extraordinary conversation which had broken for a moment the silence of the inner hall. The account was bare, the phrases monosyllabic. He reported only what had been registered on the sensitive tympanums of his ears, to the last whisper of footfalls stealing past the dark wall of the shop. Of all the formless tangle of thoughts, suspicions, interpretations, and the special and personal knowledge given to the blind which moved in his brain, he said nothing.

He shut his lips there. He felt himself on the defensive. Just as he distrusted the higher ramifications of finance (his house had gone down uninsured), so before the rites and processes of that inscrutable creature, the Law, he felt himself menaced by the invisible and the unknown, helpless, oppressed; in an abject sense, skeptical.

"Keep clear of the Law!" they had told him in his youth. The monster his imagination had summoned up then still stood beside him in his age.

Having exhausted his monosyllabic and superficial evidence, they could move him no farther. He became deaf and dumb. He sat before them, an image cast in some immensely heavy stuff, inanimate. His lack of visible emotion impressed them. Remembering his exuberance, it was only the stranger to see him unmoving and unmoved. Only once did they catch sight of something beyond. As they were preparing to leave he opened his mouth. What he said was like a swan-song to the years of his exuberant happiness. Even now there was no colour of expression in his words, which sounded mechanical.

"Now I have lost everything. My house. My last son. Even my honour. You would not think I would like to live. But I go to live. I go to work. That *cachorra*, one day, he shall come back again, in the dark night, to have a look. I shall go to show you all. That *cachorra*!"

(And from that time on, it was noted, he never referred to the fugitive by any other name than *cachorra*, which is a kind of dog. "That *cachorra*!" As if he had forfeited the relationship not only of the family, but of the very genus, the very race! "That *cachorra*!")

He pronounced this resolution without passion. When they assured him that the culprit would come back again indeed, much sooner than he expected, "with a rope around his neck," he shook his head slowly.

"No, you shall not catch that *cachorra* now. But one day ——"

There was something about its very colourlessness which made it sound oracular. It was at least prophetic. They searched, laid their traps, proceeded with all their placards, descriptions, rewards, clues, trails. But on Manuel Negro they never laid their hands.

Months passed and became years. Boaz Negro did not rebuild his house. He might have done so, out of his earnings, for upon himself he spent scarcely anything, reverting to his old habit of an almost miserly economy. Yet perhaps

it would have been harder after all. For his earnings were less and less. In that town a cobbler who sits in an empty shop is apt to wait for trade. Folk take their boots to mend where they take their bodies to rest and their minds to be edified.

No longer did the walls of Boaz's shop resound to the boastful recollections of young men. Boaz had changed. He had become not only different, but opposite. A metaphor will do best. The spirit of Boaz Negro had been a meadowed hillside giving upon the open sea, the sun, the warm, wild winds from beyond the blue horizon. And covered with flowers, always hungry and thirsty for the sun and the fabulous wind and bright showers of rain. It had become an entrenched camp, lying silent, sullen, verdureless, under a gray sky. He stood solitary against the world. His approaches were closed. He was blind and he was also deaf and dumb.

Against that what can young fellows do who wish for nothing but to rest themselves and talk about their friends and enemies? They had come and they had tried. They had raised their voices even higher than before. Their boasts had grown louder, more presumptuous, more preposterous, until, before the cold separation of that unmoving and as if contemptuous presence in the cobbler's chair, they burst of their own air, like toy balloons. And they went and left Boaz alone.

There was another thing which served, if not to keep them away, at least not to entice them back. That was the aspect of the place. It was not cheerful. It invited no one. In its way that fire-bitten ruin grew to be almost as great a scandal as the act itself had been. It was plainly an eyesore. A valuable property, on the town's main thoroughfare — and an eyesore! The neighbouring owners protested.

Their protestations might as well have gone against a stone wall. That man was deaf and dumb. He had become, in a way, a kind of vegetable, for the quality of a vegetable is that, while it is endowed with life, it remains fixed in one spot. For years Boaz was scarcely seen to move foot out of that shop that was left him, a small square, blistered promontory on the shores of ruin.

He must indeed have carried out some rudimentary sort of domestic programme under the débris at the rear (he certainly did not sleep or eat in the shop). One or two lower rooms were left fairly intact. The outward aspect of the place was formless; it grew to be no more than a mound in time; the charred timbers, one or two still standing, lean and naked against the sky, lost their blackness and faded to a silvery gray. It would have seemed strange, had they not grown accustomed to the thought, to imagine that blind man, like a mole, or some slow slug, turning himself mysteriously in the bowels of that gray mound — that time-silvered "eyesore."

When they saw him, however, he was in the shop. They opened the door to take in their work (when other cobblers turned them off), and they saw him

seated in his chair in the half darkness, his whole person, legs, torso, neck, head, as motionless as the vegetable of which we have spoken — only his hands and his bare arms endowed with visible life. The gloom had bleached the skin to the colour of damp ivory, and against the background of his immobility they moved with a certain amazing monstrousness, interminably. No, they were never still. One wondered what they could be at. Surely he could not have had enough work now to keep those insatiable hands so monstrously in motion. Even far into the night. Tap-tap-tap! Blows continuous and powerful. On what? On nothing? On the bare iron last? And for what purpose? To what conceivable end?

Well, one could imagine those arms, growing paler, also growing thicker and more formidable with that unceasing labour; the muscles feeding themselves omnivorously on their own waste, the cords toughening, the bone-tissues revitalizing themselves without end. One could imagine the whole aspiration of that mute and motionless man pouring itself out into those pallid arms, and the arms taking it up with a kind of blind greed. Storing it up. Against a day!

“That *cachorra*! One day!”

What were the thoughts of the man? What moved within that motionless cranium covered with long hair? Who can say? Behind everything, of course, stood that bitterness against the world — the blind world — blinder than he would ever be. And against “that *cachorra*.” But this was no longer a thought; it was the man.

Just as all muscular aspiration flowed into his arms, so all the energies of his senses turned to his ears. The man had become, you might say, two arms and two ears. Can you imagine a man listening, intently, through the waking hours of nine years?

Listening to footfalls. Marking with a special emphasis of concentration the beginning, rise, full passage, falling away, and dying of all the footfalls. By day, by night, winter and summer and winter again. Unravelling the skein of footfalls passing up and down the street!

For three years he wondered when they would come. For the next three years he wondered if they would ever come. It was during the last three that a doubt began to trouble him. It gnawed at his huge moral strength. Like a hidden seepage of water, it undermined (in anticipation) his terrible resolution. It was a sign perhaps of age, a slipping away of the reckless infallibility of youth.

Supposing, after all, that his ears should fail him. Supposing they were capable of being tricked, without his being able to know it. Supposing that that *cachorra* should come and go, and he, Boaz, living in some vast delusion, some unrealized distortion of memory, should let him pass unknown. Supposing precisely this thing had already happened!

Or the other way around. What if he should hear the footfalls coming, even

into the very shop itself? What if he should be as sure of them as of his own soul? What, then, if he should strike? And what then, if it were not that *cachorra* after all? How many tens and hundreds of millions of people were there in the world? Was it possible for them all to have footfalls distinct and different?

Then they would take him and hang him. And that *cachorra* might then come and go at his own will, undisturbed.

As he sat there sometimes the sweat rolled down his nose, cold as rain.

Supposing!

Sometimes, quite suddenly, in broad day, in the booming silence of the night, he would start. Not outwardly. But beneath the pale integument of his skin all his muscles tightened and his nerves sang. His breathing stopped. It seemed almost as if his heart stopped.

Was that it? Were those the feet, there, emerging faintly from the distance? Yes, there was something about them. Yes! Memory was in travail. Yes, yes, yes! No! How could he be sure? Ice ran down into his empty eyes. The footfalls were already passing. They were gone, swallowed up already by time and space. Had that been that *cachorra*?

Nothing in his life had been so hard to meet as this insidious drain of distrust in his own powers; this sense of a traitor within the walls. His iron-gray hair had turned white. It was always this now, from the beginning of the day to the end of the night: how was he to know? How was he to be inevitably, unshakably, sure?

Curiously, after all this purgatory of doubts, he did know them. For a moment at least, when he had heard them, he was unshakably sure.

It was on an evening of the winter holidays, the Portuguese festival of *Menin' Jesus*. Christ was born again in a hundred mangers on a hundred tiny altars; there was cake and wine; songs went shouting by to the accompaniment of mandolins and tramping feet. The wind blew cold under a clear sky. In all the houses there were lights; even in Boaz Negro's shop a lamp was lit just now, for a man had been in for a pair of boots which Boaz had patched. The man had gone out again. Boaz was thinking of blowing out the light. It meant nothing to him.

He leaned forward, judging the position of the lamp-chimney by the heat on his face, and puffed out his cheeks to blow. Then his cheeks collapsed suddenly, and he sat back again.

It was not odd that he had failed to hear the footfalls until they were actually within the door. A crowd of merrymakers was passing just then; their songs and tramping almost shook the shop.

Boaz sat back. Beneath his passive exterior his nerves thrummed; his muscles had grown as hard as wood. Yes! Yes! But no! He had heard nothing; no more than a single step, a single foot-pressure on the planks within the door. Dear God! He could not tell!

Going through the pain of an enormous effort, he opened his lips.

"What can I do for you?"

"Well, I — I don't know. To tell the truth —"

The voice was unfamiliar, but it might be assumed. Boaz held himself. His face remained blank, interrogating, slightly helpless.

"I am a little deaf," he said. "Come nearer."

The footfalls came half way across the intervening floor, and there appeared to hesitate. The voice, too, had a note of uncertainty.

"I was just looking around. I have a pair of — well, you mend shoes?"

Boaz nodded his head. It was not in response to the words, for they meant nothing. What he had heard was the footfalls on the floor.

Now he was sure. As has been said, for a moment at least after he had heard them he was unshakably sure. The congestion of his muscles had passed. He was at peace.

The voice became audible once more. Before the massive preoccupation of the blind man it became still less certain of itself.

"Well, I haven't got the shoes with me. I was — just looking around."

It was amazing to Boaz, this miraculous sensation of peace.

"Wait!" Then, bending his head as if listening to the winter wind, "It's cold to-night. You've left the door open. But wait!" Leaning down, his hand fell on a rope's end hanging by the chair. The gesture was one continuous, undeviating movement of the hand. No hesitation. No groping. How many hundreds, how many thousands of times, had his hand schooled itself in that gesture!

A single strong pull. With a little *bang* the front door had swung to and latched itself. Not only the front door. The other door, leading to the rear, had closed too and latched itself with a little *bang*. And leaning forward from his chair, Boaz blew out the light.

There was not a sound in the shop. Outside, feet continued to go by, ringing on the frozen road; voices were lifted; the wind hustled about the corners of the wooden shell with a continuous, shrill note of whistling. All of this outside, as on another planet. Within the blackness of the shop the complete silence persisted.

Boaz listened. Sitting on the edge of his chair, half-crouching, his head, with its long, unkempt, white hair, bent slightly to one side, he concentrated upon this chambered silence the full powers of his senses. He hardly breathed. The other person in that room could not be breathing at all, it seemed.

No, there was not a breath, not the stirring of a sole on wood, not the infinitesimal rustle of any fabric. It was as if in this utter stoppage of sound, even the blood had ceased to flow in the veins and arteries of that man, who was like a rat caught in a trap.

It was appalling even to Boaz; even to the cat. Listening became more than

a labour. He began to have to fight against a growing impulse to shout out loud, to leap, sprawl forward without aim in that unstirred darkness — do something. Sweat rolled down from behind his ears, into his shirt-collar. He gripped the chair-arms. To keep quiet he sank his teeth into his lower lip. He would not! He would not!

And of a sudden he heard before him, in the centre of the room, an outburst of breath, an outrush from lungs in the extremity of pain, thick, laborious, fearful. A coughing up of dammed air.

Pushing himself from the arms of the chair, Boaz leaped.

His fingers, passing swiftly through the air, closed on something. It was a sheaf of hair, bristly and thick. It was a man's beard.

On the road outside, up and down the street for a hundred yards, merry-making people turned to look at one another. With an abrupt cessation of laughter, of speech. Inquiringly. Even with an unconscious dilation of the pupils of their eyes.

“What was that?”

There had been a scream. There could be no doubt of that. A single, long-drawn note. Immensely high-pitched. Not as if it were human.

“God's sake! What was that? Where'd it come from?”

Those nearest said it came from the cobbler-shop of Boaz Negro.

They went and tried the door. It was closed; even locked, as if for the night. There was no light behind the window-shade. But Boaz would not have a light. They beat on the door. No answer.

But from where, then, had that prolonged, as if animal, note come?

They ran about, penetrating into the side lanes, interrogating, prying. Coming back at last, inevitably, to the neighbourhood of Boaz Negro's shop.

The body lay on the floor at Boaz's feet, where it had tumbled down slowly after a moment from the spasmodic embrace of his arms; those ivory-coloured arms which had beaten so long upon the bare iron surface of a last. Blows continuous and powerful. It seemed incredible. They were so weak now. They could not have lifted the hammer now.

But that beard! That bristly, thick, square beard of a stranger!

His hands remembered it. Standing with his shoulders fallen forward and his weak arms hanging down, Boaz began to shiver. The whole thing was incredible. What was on the floor there, upheld in the vast gulf of darkness, he could not see. Neither could he hear it; smell it. Nor (if he did not move his foot) could he feel it. What he did not hear, smell, or touch did not exist. It was not there. Incredible!

But that beard! All the accumulated doubtings of those years fell down upon him. After all, the thing he had been so fearful of in his weak imaginings had happened. He had killed a stranger. He, Boaz Negro, had murdered an innocent man!

And all on account of that beard. His deep panic made him light-headed. He began to confuse cause and effect. If it were not for that beard, it would have been that *cachorra*.

On this basis he began to reason with a crazy directness. And to act. He went and pried open the door into the entry. From a shelf he took down his razor. A big, heavy-heeled strop. His hands began to hurry. And the mug, half full of soap. And water. It would have to be cold water. But after all, he thought (light-heartedly), at this time of night —

Outside, they were at the shop again. The crowd's habit is to forget a thing quickly, once it is out of sight and hearing. But there had been something about that solitary cry which continued to bother them, even in memory. Where had it been? Where had it come from? And those who had stood nearest the cobbler-shop were heard again. They were certain now, dead certain. They could swear!

In the end they broke down the door.

If Boaz heard them he gave no sign. An absorption as complete as it was monstrous wrapped him. Kneeling in the glare of the lantern they had brought, as impervious as his own shadow sprawling behind him, he continued to shave the dead man on the floor.

No one touched him. Their minds and imaginations were arrested by the gigantic proportions of the act. The unfathomable presumption of the act. As throwing murder in their faces to the tune of a jig in a barber-shop. It is a fact that none of them so much as thought of touching him. No less than all of them, together with all other men, shorn of their imaginations — that is to say, the expressionless and imperturbable creature of the Law — would be sufficient to touch that ghastly man.

On the other hand, they could not leave him alone. They could not go away. They watched. They saw the damp, lather-soaked beard of that victimized stranger falling away, stroke by stroke of the flashing, heavy razor. The dead denuded by the blind!

It was seen that Boaz was about to speak. It was something important he was about to utter; something, one would say, fatal. The words would not come all at once. They swelled his cheeks out. His razor was arrested. Lifting his face, he encircled the watchers with a gaze at once of imploration and of command. As if he could see them. As if he could read his answer in the expressions of their faces.

"Tell me one thing now. Is it that *cachorra*?"

For the first time those men in the room made sounds. They shuffled their feet. It was as if an uncontrollable impulse to ejaculation, laughter, derision, forbidden by the presence of death, had gone down into their boot-soles.

"Manuel?" one of them said. "You mean *Manuel*?"

Boaz laid the razor down on the floor beside its work. He got up from his

knees slowly, as if his joints hurt. He sat down in his chair, rested his hands on the arms, and once more encircled the company with his sightless gaze.

"Not Manuel. Manuel was a good boy. But tell me now, is it that *cachorra*?"

Here was something out of their calculations; something for them, mentally, to chew on. Mystification is a good thing sometimes. It gives the brain a fillip, stirs memory, puts the gears of imagination in mesh. One man, an old, tobacco-chewing fellow, began to stare harder at the face on the floor. Something moved in his intellect.

"No, but look here now, by God ——"

He had even stopped chewing. But he was forestalled by another.

"Say now, if it don't look like that fellow Wood, himself. The bank fellow — that was burned — remember? Himself."

"That *cachorra* was not burned. Not that Wood. You darned fool!"

Boaz spoke from his chair. They hardly knew his voice, emerging from its long silence; it was so didactic and arid.

"That *cachorra* was not burned. It was my boy that was burned. It was that *cachorra* called my boy upstairs. That *cachorra* killed my boy. That *cachorra* put his clothes on my boy, and he set my house on fire. I knew that all the time. Because when I heard those feet come out of my house and go away, I knew they were the feet of that *cachorra* from the bank. I did not know where he was going to. Something said to me — you better ask him where he is going to. But then I said, you are foolish. He had the money from the bank. I did not know. And then my house was on fire. No, it was not my boy that went away; it was that *cachorra* all the time. You darned fools! Did you think I was waiting for my own boy?"

"Now I show you all," he said at the end. "And now I can get hanged."

No one ever touched Boaz Negro for that murder. For murder it was in the eye and letter of the Law. The Law in a small town is sometimes a curious creature; it is sometimes blind only in one eye.

Their minds and imaginations in that town were arrested by the romantic proportions of the act. Simply, no one took it up. I believe the man, Wood, was understood to have died of heart-failure.

When they asked Boaz why he had not told what he knew as to the identity of that fugitive in the night, he seemed to find it hard to say exactly. How could a man of no education define for them his own but half-denied misgivings about the Law, his sense of oppression, constraint and awe, of being on the defensive, even, in an abject way, his skepticism? About his wanting, come what might, to "keep clear of the Law"?

He did say this, "You would have laughed at me."

And this, "If I told folk it was Wood went away, then I say he would not dare come back again."

That was the last. Very shortly he began to refuse to talk about the thing



at all. The act was completed. Like the creature of fable, it had consumed itself. Out of that old man's consciousness it had departed. Amazingly. Like a dream dreamed out.

Slowly at first, in a makeshift, piece-at-a-time, poor man's way, Boaz commenced to rebuild his house. That "eyesore" vanished.

And slowly at first, like the miracle of a green shoot pressing out from the dead earth, that priceless and unquenchable exuberance of the man was seen returning. Unquenchable, after all.

#### QUESTIONS

1. In what connection is Boaz Negro's past life introduced? How does it motivate his actions?
2. What adjective is emphasized in the characterization of Campbell Wood?
3. What two words are repeated in the characterization of Boaz Negro? What first (in the story) made Boaz unhappy?
4. Is the story told entirely from the cobbler's point of view?
5. What are Boaz's reasons for keeping quiet about what he knew? Are they convincing? Was his consuming purpose revenge, or something else?
6. Compare this with other detective stories you have read. What are its outstanding qualities?

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION IX

1. List the chief character and problem for each story read.
2. Compare the plots of Lardner, Chekhov, O. Henry, Conrad, Maupassant, Steele, and Poe (number of complications, chronological order, flashbacks, surprise ending, etc.).
3. Which ten characters do you recall most clearly? Jot down traits of each. Check texts for methods of characterization. How many come from character stories?
4. Select ten memorable scenes and find out what proportion of story was devoted to setting in each case. Is setting realistic or romantic? important or unimportant to plot? Find settings which depict specific sections of America.
5. Compare point of view in the stories by Hemingway, Faulkner, Maupassant, Cather, Conrad, and Fitzgerald. What difference would it make if Cather's story were told with the point of view used by Maupassant, or Faulkner's with the point of view of Hemingway, and vice versa?
6. Compare treatment of theme in Conrad, Benét, Lardner, and Mansfield. Which writers devote most words to it? Which ones merely imply it? At what point in the story is the theme usually emphasized?
7. List devices for suspense in the climactic scenes by Poe, Steele, Benét, Cather, Parker, and Baldwin. Roughly what proportion of each story is devoted to the climax?
8. Which five minor characters do you remember most clearly? What purpose does each serve in his story? Which minor characters have problems of their own that could be used as subjects for other short stories?
9. Compare the first three or four paragraphs in all the stories you read. Which beginning creates most suspense? most distinct atmosphere? most clearly defined character? Are there any stories which could have begun with the fourth, fifth, or sixth paragraphs?

10. In which stories are you curious about what happens after the end? Do you prefer stories (like "Footfalls") that have a definite conclusion, with little left to the imagination? Which are more true to life? What should be the relationship of art and life?
11. To which author would you award a prize for cleverest plot? best characterization? outstanding setting or atmosphere? good dialogue? most significant theme? greatest suspense? most entertaining style?

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Write a narrative report, like Baldwin's, of an automobile collision, forest fire, dramatic rescue, or some other accident or disaster you have participated in or witnessed.
2. In the newspapers or in your experience, find a human problem or dilemma like that in Maupassant. Write it up in story form.
3. Write an adventure story, like Conrad's, of a mountain-climbing expedition, a hunting or canoe trip, etc.
4. Write up an incident from college life, like Parker's, with two or at most three characters; for example, how you broke the ice on some social occasion, or what you did when you discovered a student breaking rules when you were proctor, etc.
5. Write up, subjectively as Joyce does, an adolescent or childhood experience that made a profound impression on you, perhaps changed your character or altered the course of your life.
6. Write a story of family or community conflict, like Faulkner's, told from a child's point of view.
7. Write a character study, like Poe's or Cather's, of an unusual or abnormal person; have an exciting climax to your tale.
8. Write up a legend, like Benét's, about your home state, using realistic description of the countryside and, if possible, humorous dialogue.



## SECTION

# X

## PLAYS

On his stage — the microcosm of a greater stage, the world — the dramatist has one prime purpose: to portray men and women, to reveal character. “The hero,” Maxwell Anderson says, makes “a discovery . . . of some element in his environment or in his own soul of which he has not been aware.” Dr. Stockmann, in *An Enemy of the People*, sees his neighbors and himself in a new light. Ferrovius, in *Androcles and the Lion*, learns that his spirit belongs to Mars, not to Christ. The playwright has unmasked a soul — and that is the essence of drama.

If you were a playwright, you would have several special problems in writing which have not been discussed, and which are more difficult than any we have yet faced. But don’t worry; no one expects you to be a playwright at this point. The idea in this as in the other introductions is to show you, by taking you behind the scenes with the writer himself, how it is done. If you want to try it yourself, all the better; but you will certainly enjoy your reading more if you approach it from a writer’s point of view, just as you can really appreciate a house if you have helped to build one.

Such technical terms as “exposition” and “dramatic irony,” which professors have a habit of tossing off the way a carpenter tosses off “studs” and “joists,” should be defined. The meaning of a word like “climax,” which we all know in a vague way, needs to be sharpened. Let’s begin with a simple term — *dialogue* — the material, you might say, with which the play is built.

In good dialogue, speeches should usually be short, imitating the quick interchange of actual conversation. Sentences must be short; capable of being delivered without leaving the actor breathless and the audience bored. They must have the rhythms of spoken English, and often colloquial words will make them more realistic. For short sentences and real life rhythms, listen to Megaera, in *Androcles and the Lion*: “Youd much better have remained a drunkard. I can forgive a man being addicted to drink: it’s only natural; and I dont deny I like a drop myself sometimes. What I cant stand is your being addicted to Chris-

tianity. And whats worse again, your being addicted to animals." The average length of clauses here is only eight words — yet Shaw is writing the "drama of ideas"! As for colloquialisms, any page of *Bound East to Cardiff* offers specimens; for instance, Driscoll's "divil a thing" and "divil a doubt av ut."

Then, in addition to making his dialogue convincingly realistic, the playwright must make it advance the action of his play. A play is a story that is acted out; the audience wants to feel that the characters are getting somewhere, even if all that is happening on the stage is a drawing-room conversation between two of them. The last third of *Bound East for Cardiff*, for example, consists of just such a two-way dialogue, between Driscoll and Yank; yet there is a mounting suspense because of the steady and inexorable approach of death which is *felt through* the dialogue: Yank's intuition that he is to die, his failing eyesight, his remorse for past evil, at last Death itself, symbolized by the lady in black.

A dramatist has another special problem in what is known as exposition. In any story there are essential facts about the past which the narrator must tell his audience; but the dramatist can speak only through his characters. If, as in *Bound East for Cardiff*, the play opens with a seriously injured man lying in his bunk in the forecastle of a ship, the audience must be told what happened to him. When Yank groans, the other sailors break off their coarse jesting and, naturally enough, speak of the accident their comrade has just had. The great trick about exposition is to have it seem natural, unforced. In *An Enemy of the People* the newspaper editor and the Burgomaster talk a little artificially about the town's Baths, at the beginning, to inform the audience of the importance of the Baths in the town economy; but when the editor refers to Dr. Stockmann's forthcoming article on the Baths and the jealous Burgomaster wants to know all about it, we have exposition that is first-rate.

Of course, a playwright must *see* his drama acted out on a stage. He must provide for exits and entrances, stage "business" (action), etc. To appreciate this problem, read *Bound East for Cardiff* through, skipping all the speeches. In other words, just read the stage directions and try to visualize the scenes: first, the triangular forecastle, rows of sleeping bunks, uppers and lowers, portholes, a lamp, a doorway, oilskins hanging from a hook, sea-chests under the bunks, the blast of the steamer's whistle at one-minute intervals. . . . For stage business, watch Driscoll in that last talk with Yank: putting his hands over his ears in order not to hear Yank speak of death; grasping Yank's hand; getting Yank a dipper of water; shrinking away from the bunk; making the sign of the cross; returning to the bunk and bending over Yank; kneeling, head in hands; making the sign of the cross again. An actor acts; the playwright never forgets that, and you should try not to when you read the script.

A play must be built to a climax, or high point of action — one major, and several minor ones coinciding with the "curtain" that ends each act. *An Enemy of the People* affords excellent illustrations. At the end of Act I, for example,

Dr. Stockmann has just learned that the town Baths are poisoned; he is exultant. The town will, must honor the discoverer of so important a truth. "Hurrah, Katrina!" are the Doctor's words as the curtain falls — a high emotional point. But difficulties arise. There are forces on the other side, incomprehensible though it is to Dr. Stockmann. At last, he calls a meeting to present the truth — and here the issue is decided. This meeting is the *climax*, the point of highest tension just before affairs turn out definitely one way or the other, favorably or unfavorably for the hero.

Also, there are various effects the playwright employs to entertain the audience, win sympathy for his characters, or create suspense. Chief of these, perhaps, is *dramatic irony*. This means that the audience knows something which the characters do not know — generally something the contrary of what the characters think. There is a very good example in Act III of *An Enemy of the People*. Dr. Stockmann bursts exuberantly into the newspaper office, breathing fire and battle against the Burgomaster. He supposes everyone present is for him; but there has been a change of heart, just before the Doctor came on stage, and the audience knows this, of course. Furthermore, the audience knows that the Burgomaster himself is concealed in an adjoining room! Affairs are in just the opposite state from what Dr. Stockmann thinks they are, so that everything he says is fraught with dramatic irony.

Finally, how do we define tragedy and comedy? The playwright must think about this, too. A tragedy is a play which is serious in tone, which shows something human and fine being wasted. Macbeth's courage and generosity are corrupted, destroyed, by his unchecked, rapacious ambition. Yank's loyalty and strength, his dreams for the future, are cut off. A tragedy shows the inevitable defeat which the individual suffers in life, and when the individual is of the right stature there is pity and awe in the spectacle. Comedy, on the other hand, makes us laugh or smile by turning a spotlight on some of the many incongruities in life: for example, a spindly husband, like Androcles, bullied by a robust wife reverses the usual relation of the sexes in which the man is physically the stronger — so we laugh. Or, Ferrovius, the "muscular Christian," "converting" an opponent by the might of his fist is humorous because it reverses the usual meaning of "convert" (persuade).

Of the three plays in this section, the simplest in structure and slightest in action is O'Neill's one-act *Bound East for Cardiff*. It is not necessarily the easiest to comprehend, however, because it is a poetic tragedy. It shows a strong man facing death. It opens with Yank lying, dark-haired, pale-faced, limp in his bunk, a striking figure, while the other seamen jest coarsely. Yank groans, awakens, spits blood. The Captain examines him again. We learn that Yank is going to die. There is almost no action, yet O'Neill clothes the passing of this common seaman with the great beauty of his language ("This sailor life ain't much to cry about leavin' — just one ship after another, hard work, small pay, and bum

grub; and when we git into port, just a drunk endin' up in a fight, and all your money gone, and then ship away again. . . . There ain't much in all that that'd make yuh sorry to lose it, Drisc.'").

What O'Neill has done, of course, is to show that there can be dignity, even grandeur, in the death of an ordinary man — not a king, like the heroes of Greek tragedy, or Macbeth — just a sailor. Yank is characterized not only by what he himself says, his regret for the man he killed, his remembrance of his friends, but by the respect of the other hardened sailors; and the moment of death is lent greater dignity by the touch of symbolism, the vision of the lady in black. At the end, the tragedy becomes not Yank's alone, but Everyman's: like the hero recommended by Aristotle for dramatists, Yank is not perfect, he has his faults, but he is also a strong man who must now, like all of us, ship on a last voyage, alone. In its mingling of realism and symbolism, its effective "theater" (note tableau at the end), and its powerful theme, *Bound East for Cardiff* is characteristic of the writer usually considered America's greatest dramatist.

*Androcles and the Lion*, on the other hand, is a delightful intellectual comedy by one of England's greatest playwrights. Humor plus the drama of ideas equals Bernard Shaw; even in the comic opera Prologue, he manages to say something profound about marriage and the average woman through Megaera (in the speech to her husband in which she unconsciously portrays herself: "You get me the name of being a shrew with your meek ways, always talking as if butter wouldnt melt in your mouth. And just because I look a big strong woman, and because I'm good hearted and a bit hasty, and because youre always driving me to do things I'm sorry for afterwards, people say 'Poor man: what a life his wife leads him!' Oh, if they only knew! And you think I dont know. But I do, I do, [*screaming*] I do.'").

Shaw, like every great comic dramatist, finds humor in incongruity; but he likes especially to seek out his incongruities among ill-assorted *ideas*. His characters represent definite conflicting philosophies: Androcles is a humanitarian and animal lover; Ferrovius, a born fighter; the Captain, a champion of the Roman State; Spintho, a sensualist and a coward; Lavinia, a believer in God. They talk, and we laugh — at Ferrovius, trying to make himself into a pacifist, at Spintho, persuading himself that he loves Christ instead of fearing the consequences, here, of his evil life, etc. By the end of the play, most of them will have discovered what they truly are.

Of course, Shaw has selected two extremely dramatic situations for his play: the arrival of the Christians in Rome, where they are to be martyred; and the scene behind the Emperor's box at the Coliseum, when the martyrdoms are actually starting. He doesn't hold his audience just by his inimitable dialogue between contrasting characters. There is *conflict* going on almost continuously, between the Centurion and the Christians at the beginning, then between Lavinia and the Captain, then between the Roman scoffers and Ferrovius, and so on. The deepest struggle is between Lavinia and the Captain — Christ and

Rome. Ironically, the handsome Captain suggests to Lavinia that "if you cannot burn a morsel of incense as a matter of conviction, you might at least do so as a matter of good taste, to avoid shocking the religious convictions of your fellow citizens." More seriously and shrewdly, he accuses her and the other Christians of self-deception: what they call faith, he says, is only stubborn pride and self-conceit. But in the end, although afraid of the lions and half in love with the Captain, Lavinia faces death clear-eyed. For what? "I don't know," she says. "If it were for anything small enough to know, it would be too small to die for. I think I'm going to die for God." And the Captain resolves to die with her — Lavinia and her faith have won.

But the tone of most of the play is too light to support so serious a conclusion. Deftly, with a little assistance from Ferrovius' fighting spirit and Androcles' humanitarianism, not to mention a courteous and grateful King of the Beasts, Shaw achieves a happy ending. He has illustrated several interesting points of view, thrown out his ideas about the early Christians and their persecution, made you laugh and made you think . . . has added a small masterpiece to the gallery of English comedy.

With Ibsen we reach the full-length play, the "problem play" presented on the "fourth wall stage" (i.e., a stage in which the audience imagines itself looking through a "fourth wall" at actors unaware of its presence) — the foundation of the modern drama. Before Ibsen began to write, in the middle of the nineteenth century, plays were romantic, sentimental, conventional. Afterwards, they were realistic, concerned with important social problems. Ibsen helped prepare the world audience for O'Neill's characters, for Shaw's ideas.

*An Enemy of the People* is characteristic of Ibsen in being concerned with an important social problem, but, unlike some of his more somber dramas, it is rocked now and then by gales of robust Norwegian humor. It is an excellent work to study for the *architecture* of the full-length play, and for the way in which the author's tremendous interest in his *theme* practically generates the play.

The theme, of course, is that even a free, democratic society may, through "public opinion," place intolerable restrictions upon the rights of an individual. To drive home his point, Ibsen has the opposite view stated almost at once by the stuffy Burgomaster, his "villain": "The individual must subordinate himself to society, or, more precisely, to the authorities." He has the newspapermen Hovstad and Billing express unlimited enthusiasm for Dr. Stockmann's discovery that the Bath waters are polluted (to contrast more strongly with their later betrayal of Dr. Stockmann). He sets up a diabolical conspiracy against the good Doctor, has a slashing, melodramatic climax with the Doctor ranged against his native town, howled down by a mob. Exaggerated? Perhaps. But all of this does show what can happen to one who flouts public opinion; it puts Ibsen's point across and provides exciting action at the same time. And, a reading of current newspapers is likely to suggest, it *could* happen.

As for the plot, it is strongly but simply constructed: Act I presents the



Doctor's great discovery; Act II, the initial reactions of various influential people, the Doctor's apparent advantage over the Burgomaster; Act III, the turning point (as in many of Shakespeare's plays), the "second thoughts" of these same factions and their opposition to the Doctor; Act IV, their attempt to crush him — the climax; Act V, his indomitable resolution to carry on the battle against the "compact majority," in defense of the individual and his lonely intuition of truth. Characters are depicted good and bad, almost a black and white contrast, but the play is saved from being melodrama by the great vitality of its *dramatis personae*, especially Dr. Stockmann. "A man should never put on his best trousers when he goes out to battle for freedom and truth," observes the Doctor ruefully, fingering the tear in them after he is mobbed; and shortly afterwards, still in those best trousers, he is chasing the "moderate" villain Aslaksen around the writing table with his umbrella, roaring at him to leave via the study window because the poor fellow thought he could make a deal with the undaunted Doctor.

It is interesting to know that *An Enemy of the People* is an allegory: Ibsen had been attacked by critics and the public for daring to treat venereal disease and its effect upon the unborn in his tragedy *Ghosts*. He replied by writing this play, in which Stockmann is a self-portrait. Ibsen, the playwright, had discovered something that was poisoning the waters of his society but was hushed up; when Ibsen, like Stockmann, spoke up, he was mobbed by the respectable people. But both Stockmann and his creator went on fighting.

Ibsen, Shaw, and O'Neill are the pillars of modern drama, of the period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which has been called the third great era in world drama (after the ancient Greek plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and the Renaissance plays of Shakespeare and the French and Spanish dramatists). From the work of these three dramatists to more recent plays like Maxwell Anderson's *Winterset* or Miller's *Death of a Salesman* the gap is not wide. Anderson and Miller too write of very ordinary, everyday people, and each suggests a social problem: in Miller's case, the futility of a life devoted to salesmanship, in Anderson's the injustice of society toward reformers. If the impulse which Ibsen, Shaw, and O'Neill have given toward realism and the drama of ideas is today less strongly felt, it is still probably more influential than any new trend.

But, of course, the drama will outlive the fashions which these three have given it, and also such new fashions as the "psychological" play and "theater in the round." It is one of the oldest and most comprehensive of human arts, once associated with music, painting, poetry, and the dance, still combined with more art forms than any other single activity. In Greek times it served the pagan religion, in medieval times the Christian, and through no accident: for the writer who strives to reveal character in action is searching for the springs of human conduct, and is dealing inevitably with good and evil, with man and with God.

*Eugene O'Neill became a playwright only after he had gone adventuring as a seaman, prospected for gold, been a reporter, and recovered from an attack of tuberculosis. He began with the one-act play, which he considered "a fine vehicle for something poetical, for something spiritual in feeling that cannot be carried through a long play." Bound East for Cardiff, the first of his plays to be performed, was given by the Provincetown Players in their Wharf Theater in 1916. O'Neill himself took the part of the Second Mate, and the sea washed under the old wharf, "spraying through the holes in the floor." The full-length Beyond the Horizon (1920) won him recognition as America's leading dramatist, and was followed by The Emperor Jones (1920), The Hairy Ape (1922), Strange Interlude (1928), Mourning Becomes Electra (1931), and other masterpieces. O'Neill has been awarded a Pulitzer Prize three times, and the Nobel Prize for literature.*

## CHARACTERS

Yank	Scotty	Ivan
Driscoll	Olson	The Captain
Cocky	Paul	The Second Mate
Davis	Smitty	

SCENE. *The seamen's forecabin of the British tramp steamer Glencairn on a foggy night midway on the voyage between New York and Cardiff. An irregular-shaped compartment, the sides of which almost meet at the far end to form a triangle. Sleeping bunks about six feet long, ranged three deep with a space of three feet separating the upper from the lower, are built against the sides. On the right above the bunks three or four port-holes can be seen. In front of the bunks, rough wooden benches. Over the bunks on the left, a lamp in a bracket. In the left foreground, a doorway. On the floor near it, a pail with a tin dipper. Oil-skins are hanging from a hook near the doorway.*

*The far side of the forecabin is so narrow that it contains only one series of bunks.*

*In under the bunks a glimpse can be had of sea-chests, suit-cases, sea-boots, etc., jammed in indiscriminately.*

*At regular intervals of a minute or so the blast of the steamer's whistle can be heard above all the other sounds.*

*Five men are sitting on the benches talking. They are dressed in dirty patched suits of dungaree, flannel shirts, and all are in their stocking feet. Four of the men are pulling on pipes and the air is heavy with rancid tobacco*

smoke. *Sitting on the top bunk in the left foreground, a Norwegian, PAUL, is softly playing some folk-song on a battered accordion. He stops from time to time to listen to the conversation.*

*In the lower bunk in the rear a dark-haired, hard-featured man is lying apparently asleep. One of his arms is stretched limply over the side of the bunk. His face is very pale, and drops of clammy perspiration glisten on his forehead.*

*It is nearing the end of the dogwatch — about ten minutes to eight in the evening.*

COCKY [*a weazened runt of a man. He is telling a story. The others are listening with amused, incredulous faces, interrupting him at the end of each sentence with loud derisive guffaws*]: Makin' love to me, she was! It's Gawd's truth! A bloomin' nigger! Greased all over with cocoanut oil, she was. Gawd blimey, I couldn't stand 'er. Bloody old cow, I says; and with that I fetched 'er a biff on the ear wot knocked 'er silly, an' — [*He is interrupted by a roar of laughter from the others.*]

DAVIS [*a middle-aged man with black hair and mustache*]: You're a liar, Cocky.

SCOTTY [*a dark young fellow*]: Ho-ho! Ye werr neverr in New Guinea in yourr life, I'm thinkin'.

OLSON [*a Swede with a drooping blond mustache — with ponderous sarcasm*]: Yust tink of it! You say she wass a cannibal, Cocky?

DRISCOLL [*a brawny Irishman with the battered features of a prizefighter*]: How cud ye doubt ut, Ollie? A quane av the naygurs she musta been surely. Who else wud think herself aqual to fallin' in love wid a beauthiful, divil-may-care rake av a man the loike av Cocky? [*A burst of laughter from the crowd.*]

COCKY [*indignantly*]: Gawd strike me dead if it ain't true, every bleedin' word of it. 'Appened ten year ago come Christmas.

SCOTTY: 'Twas a Christmas dinner she had her eyes on.

DAVIS: He'd a been a tough old bird.

DRISCOLL: 'Tis lucky for both av ye ye escaped; for the quane av the cannibal isles wad a died av the bellyache the day afther Christmas, divil a doubt av ut. [*The laughter at this is long and loud.*]

COCKY [*sullenly*]: Blarsted fat'eads!

[*The sick man in the lower bunk in the rear groans and moves restlessly. There is a hushed silence. All the men turn and stare at him.*]

DRISCOLL: Sssh! [*In a hushed whisper.*] We'd best not be talkin' so loud and him tryin' to have a bit av a sleep. [*He tiptoes softly to the side of the bunk.*] Yank! You'd be wantin' a drink av wather, maybe?

[*YANK does not reply. DRISCOLL bends over and looks at him.*] It's asleep he is, sure enough. His breath is chokin' in his throat loike wather gurglin' in a poipe.

[*He comes back quietly and sits down. All are silent, avoiding each other's eyes.*]

COCKY [*after a pause*]: Pore devil! It's over the side for 'im, Gawd 'elp 'im.

DRISCOLL: Stop your croakin'! He's not dead yet and, praise God, he'll have many a long day yet before him.

SCOTTY [*shaking his head doubtfully*]: He's bod, mon, he's verry bod.

DAVIS: Lucky he's alive. Many a man's light woulda gone out after a fall like that.

OLSON: You saw him fall?

DAVIS: Right next to him. He and me was goin' down in number two hold to do some chippin'. He puts his leg over careless-like and misses the ladder and plumps straight down to the bottom. I was scared to look over for a minute, and then I heard him groan and I scuttled down after him. He was hurt bad inside, for the blood was drippin' from the side of his mouth. He was groanin' hard, but he never let a word out of him.

COCKY: An' you blokes remember when we 'auled 'im in 'ere? Oh, 'ell, 'e says, oh, 'ell — like that, and nothink else.

OLSON: Did the captain know where he iss hurted?

COCKY: That silly ol' jossler! Wot the 'ell would 'e know abaht anythink?

SCOTTY [*scornfully*]: He fiddles in his mouth wi' a bit of glass.

DRISCOLL [*angrily*]: The divil's own life ut is to be out on the lonely sea wid nothin' betune you and a grave in the ocean but a spindle-shanked, gray-whiskered auld fool the loike av him. 'Twas enough to make a saint shwear to see him wid his gold watch in his hand, tryin' to look as wise as an owl on a tree, and all the toime he not knowin' whether 'twas cholery or the barber's itch was the matther with Yank.

SCOTTY [*sardonically*]: He gave him a dose of salts, na doot?

DRISCOLL: Divil a thing he gave him at all, but looked in the book he had wid him, and shook his head, and walked out widout sayin' a word, the second mate afther him no wiser than himself, God's curse on the two av thim!

COCKY [*after a pause*]: Yank was a good shipmate, pore beggar. Lend me four bob in Noo Yark, 'e did.

DRISCOLL [*warmly*]: A good shipmate he was and is, none betther. Ye said no more than the truth, Cocky. Five years and more ut is since first I shipped wid him, and we've stuck together iver since through good luck and bad. Fights we've had, God help us, but 'twas only when we'd a bit av drink taken, and we always shook hands the nixt mornin'. Whativer was his was mine, and many's the toime I'd a been on the beach or worse, but for him. And now — [*His voice trembles as he fights to control his emotion.*] Divil take me if I'm not startin' to blubber loike an auld woman, and he not dead at all, but goin' to live many a long year yet, maybe.

DAVIS: The sleep'll do him good. He seems better now.

OLSON: If he wude eat something —

DRISCOLL: Wud ye have him be eatin' in his condishun? Sure it's hard enough on the rest av us wid nothin' the matther wid our insides to be stomachin' the skoff on this rusty lime-juicer.

SCOTTY [*indignantly*]: It's a starvation ship.

DAVIS: Plenty o' work and no food — and the owners ridin' around in carriages!

OLSON: Hash, hash! Stew, stew! Marmalade, py damn! [*He spits disgustedly.*]

COCKY: Bloody swill! Fit only for swine is wot I say.

DRISCOLL: And the dish-wather they disguise wid the name av tea! And the putty they call bread! My belly feels loike I'd swalleyed a dozen rivets at the thought av ut! And seabiscuit that'd break the teeth av a lion if he had the misfortune to take a bite at one! [*Unconsciously they have all raised their voices, forgetting the sick man in their sailor's delight at finding something to grumble about.*]

PAUL [*swings his feet over the side of his bunk, stops playing his accordion, and says slowly*]: And rotten po-tay-toes! [*He starts in playing again. The sick man gives a groan of pain.*]

DRISCOLL [*holding up his hand*]: Shut your mouths, all av you. 'Tis a hell av a thing for us to be complainin' about our guts, and a sick man maybe dyin' listenin' to us. [*Gets up and shakes his fist at the Norwegian.*] God stiffen you, ye squarehead scut! Put down that organ av yours or I'll break your ugly face for you. Is that banshee schreechin' fit music for a sick man?

[*The Norwegian puts his accordion in the bunk and lies back and closes his eyes.*  
DRISCOLL goes over and stands beside YANK. The steamer's whistle sounds particularly loud in the silence.]

DAVIS: Damn this fog! [*Reaches in under a bunk and yanks out a pair of sea-boots, which he pulls on.*] My lookout next, too. Must be nearly eight bells, boys.

[*With the exception of OLSON, all the men sitting up put on oilskins, sou'westers, sea-boots, etc., in preparation for the watch on deck. OLSON crawls into a lower bunk on the right.*]

SCOTTY: My wheel.

OLSON [*disgustedly*]: Nothin' but yust dirty weather all dis voyage. I yust can't sleep when weestle blow. [*He turns his back to the light and is soon fast asleep and snoring.*]

SCOTTY: If this fog keeps up, I'm tellin' ye, we'll no be in Cardiff for a week or more.

DRISCOLL: 'Twas just such a night as this the auld Dover wint down. Just about this toime ut was, too, and we all sittin' round in the fo'castle, Yank beside me, whin all av a suddint we heard a great slitherin' crash, and the ship heeled over till we was all in a heap on wan side. What came afther I disremember exactly, except 'twas a hard shift to get the boats over the side before the auld teakittle sank. Yank was in the same boat wid me, and sivin morthal days we drifted wid scarcely a drop of wather or a bite to chew on. 'Twas Yank here that held me down whin I wanted to jump into the ocean, roarin' mad wid

the thirst. Picked up we were on the same day wid only Yank in his senses, and him steerin' the boat.

COCKY [*protestingly*]: Blimey but you're a cheerful blighter, Driscoll! Talkin' abaht shipwrecks in this 'ere blushin' fog.

[YANK *groans and stirs uneasily, opening his eyes. DRISCOLL hurries to his side.*]

DRISCOLL: Are ye feelin' any betther, Yank?

YANK [*in a weak voice*]: No.

DRISCOLL: Sure, you must be. You look as sthrong as an ox. [*Appealing to the others.*] Am I tellin' him a lie?

DAVIS: The sleep's done you good.

COCKY: You'll be 'avin' your pint of beer in Cardiff this day week.

SCOTTY: And fish and chips, mon!

YANK [*peevishly*]: What're yuh all lyin' fur? D'yuh think I'm scared to — [*He hesitates as if frightened by the word he is about to say.*]

DRISCOLL: Don't be thinkin' such things!

[*The ship's bell is heard heavily tolling eight times. From the forecastle head above, the voice of the lookout rises in a long wail: Aaall's well! The men look uncertainly at YANK as if undecided whether to say good-by or not.*]

YANK [*in an agony of fear*]: Don't leave me, Drisc! I'm dyin', I tell yuh. I won't stay here alone with everyone snorin'. I'll go out on deck. [*He makes a feeble attempt to rise, but sinks back with a sharp groan. His breath comes in wheezy gasps.*] Don't leave me, Drisc! [*His face grows white and his head falls back with a jerk.*]

DRISCOLL: Don't be worryin', Yank. I'll not move a step out av here — and let that divil av a bosun curse his black head off. You speak a word to the bosun, Cocky. Tell him that Yank is bad took and I'll be stayin' wid him a while yet.

COCKY: Right-o.

[COCKY, DAVIS and SCOTTY go out quietly.]

COCKY [*from the alleyway*]: Gawd blimey, the fog's thick as soup.

DRISCOLL: Are ye satisfied now, Yank? [*Receiving no answer, he bends over the still form.*] He's fainted, God help him! [*He gets a tin dipper from the bucket and bathes YANK's forehead with the water. YANK shudders and opens his eyes.*]

YANK [*slowly*]: I thought I was goin' then. Wha' did yuh wanta wake me up fur?

DRISCOLL [*with a forced gayety*]: It is wishful for heaven ye are?

YANK [*gloomily*]: Hell, I guess.

DRISCOLL [*crossing himself involuntarily*]: For the love av the saints don't be talkin' loike that! You'd give a man the creeps. It's chippin' rust on deck you'll be in a day or two wid the best uv us. [YANK *does not answer, but closes his eyes wearily.*]

[*The seaman who has been on lookout, SMITTY, a young Englishman, comes in and takes off his dripping oilskins. While he is doing this the man whose turn at the wheel has been relieved enters. He is a dark burly fellow with a round stupid*

*face. The Englishman steps softly over to DRISCOLL. The other crawls into a lower bunk.]*

SMITTY [*whispering*]: How's Yank?

DRISCOLL: Betther. Ask him yourself. He's awake.

YANK: I'm all right, Smitty.

SMITTY: Glad to hear it, Yank. [*He crawls to an upper bunk and is soon asleep.*]

IVAN [*the stupid-faced seaman, who comes in after SMITTY, twists his head in the direction of the sick man*]: You feel gude, Jank?

YANK [*wearily*]: Yes, Ivan.

IVAN: Dot's gude. [*He rolls over on his side and falls asleep immediately.*]

YANK [*after a pause broken only by snores — with a bitter laugh*]: Good-by and good luck to the lot of you!

DRISCOLL: Is ut painin' you again?

YANK: It hurts like hell — here. [*He points to the lower part of his chest on the left side.*] I guess my old pump's busted. Ooohh! [*A spasm of pain contracts his pale features. He presses his hand to his side and writhes on the thin mattress of his bunk. The perspiration stands out in beads on his forehead.*]

DRISCOLL [*terrified*]: Yank! Yank! What is ut? [*Jumping to his feet.*] I'll run for the captain. [*He starts for the doorway.*]

YANK [*sitting up in his bunk, frantic with fear*]: Don't leave me, Drisc! For God's sake don't leave me alone! [*He leans over the side of his bunk and spits. DRISCOLL comes back to him.*] Blood! Ugh!

DRISCOLL: Blood again! I'd best be gettin' the captain.

YANK: No, no, don't leave me! If yuh do I'll git up and follow you. I ain't no coward, but I'm scared to stay here with all of them asleep and snorin'. [*DRISCOLL, not knowing what to do, sits down on the bench beside him. He grows calmer and sinks back on the mattress.*] The captain can't do me no good, yuh know it yourself. The pain ain't so bad now, but I thought it had me then. It was like a buzz-saw cuttin' into me.

DRISCOLL [*fiercely*]: God blarst ut!

[*The CAPTAIN and the SECOND MATE of the steamer enter the forecabin. The CAPTAIN is an old man with gray mustache and whiskers. The MATE is clean-shaven and middle-aged. Both are dressed in simple blue uniforms.*]

THE CAPTAIN [*taking out his watch and feeling YANK's pulse*]: And how is the sick man?

YANK [*feebly*]: All right, sir.

THE CAPTAIN: And the pain in the chest?

YANK: It still hurts, sir, worse than ever.

THE CAPTAIN [*taking a thermometer from his pocket and putting it into YANK's mouth*]: Here. Be sure and keep this in under your tongue, not over it.

THE MATE [*after a pause*]: Isn't this your watch on deck, Driscoll?

DRISCOLL: Yes, sorr, but Yank was fearin' to be alone, and —

THE CAPTAIN: That's all right, Driscoll.

DRISCOLL: Thank ye, sorr.

THE CAPTAIN [*stares at his watch for a moment or so; then takes the thermometer from YANK'S mouth and goes to the lamp to read it. His expression grows very grave. He beckons the MATE and DRISCOLL to the corner near the doorway. YANK watches them furtively. The CAPTAIN speaks in a low voice to the MATE*]: Way up both of them. [*To DRISCOLL.*] He has been spitting blood again?

DRISCOLL: Not much for the hour just past, sorr, but before that —

THE CAPTAIN: A great deal?

DRISCOLL: Yes, sorr.

THE CAPTAIN: He hasn't eaten anything?

DRISCOLL: No, sorr.

THE CAPTAIN: Did he drink that medicine I sent him?

DRISCOLL: Yes, sorr, but it didn't stay down.

THE CAPTAIN [*shaking his head*]: I'm afraid — he's very weak. I can't do anything else for him. It's too serious for me. If this had only happened a week later we'd be in Cardiff in time to —

DRISCOLL: Plaze help him some way, sorr!

THE CAPTAIN [*impatiently*]: But, my good man, I'm not a doctor. [*More kindly as he sees DRISCOLL'S grief.*] You and he have been shipmates a long time?

DRISCOLL: Five years and more, sorr.

THE CAPTAIN: I see. Well, don't let him move. Keep him quiet and we'll hope for the best. I'll read the matter up and send him some medicine, something to ease the pain, anyway. [*Goes over to YANK.*] Keep up your courage! You'll be better tomorrow. [*He breaks down lamely before YANK'S steady gaze.*] We'll pull you through all right — and — hm — well — coming, Robinson? Dammit! [*He goes out hurriedly, followed by the MATE.*]

DRISCOLL [*trying to conceal his anxiety*]: Didn't I tell you you wasn't half as sick as you thought you was? The Captain'll have you out on deck cursin' and swearin' loike a trooper before the week is out.

YANK: Don't lie, Drisc. I heard what he said, and if I didn't I c'd tell by the way I feel. I know what's goin' to happen. I'm goin' to — [*He hesitates for a second — then resolutely.*] I'm goin' to die, that's what, and the sooner the better!

DRISCOLL [*wildly*]: No, and be damned to you, you're not. I'll not let you.

YANK: It ain't no use, Drisc. I ain't got a chance, but I ain't scared. Gimme a drink of water, will yuh, Drisc? My throat's burnin' up.

[*DRISCOLL brings the dipper full of water and supports his head while he drinks in great gulps.*]

DRISCOLL [*seeking vainly for some word of comfort*]: Are ye feelin' more aisy-loike now?



YANK: Yes — now — when I know it's all up. [*A pause.*] You mustn't take it so hard, Drisc. I was just thinkin' it ain't as bad as people think — dyin'. I ain't never took much stock in the truck them sky-pilots preach. I ain't never had religion; but I know whatever it is what comes after it can't be no worsen'n this. I don't like to leave you, Drisc, but — that's all.

DRISCOLL [*with a groan*]: Lad, lad, don't be talkin'.

YANK: This sailor life ain't much to cry about leavin' — just one ship after another, hard work, small pay, and bum grub; and when we git into port, just a drunk endin' up in a fight, and all your money gone, and then ship away again. Never meetin' no nice people; never gittin' outa sailor-town, hardly, in any port; travelin' all over the world and never seein' none of it; without no one to care whether you're alive or dead. [*With a bitter smile.*] There ain't much in all that that'd make yuh sorry to lose it, Drisc.

DRISCOLL [*gloomily*]: It's a hell av a life, the sea.

YANK [*musingly*]: It must be great to stay on dry land all your life and have a farm with a house of your own with cows and pigs and chickens, 'way in the middle of the land where yuh'd never smell the sea or see a ship. It must be great to have a wife, and kids to play with at night after supper when your work was done. It must be great to have a home of your own, Drisc.

DRISCOLL [*with a great sigh*]: It must, surely; but what's the use av thinkin' av ut? Such things are not for the loikes av us.

YANK: Sea-farin' is all right when you're young and don't care, but we ain't chickens no more, and somehow, I dunno, this last year has seemed rotten, and I've had a hunch I'd quit — with you, of course — and we'd save our coin, and go to Canada or Argentine or some place and git a farm, just a small one, just enough to live on. I never told yuh this, 'cause I thought you'd laugh at me.

DRISCOLL [*enthusiastically*]: Laugh at you, is ut? When I'm havin' the same thoughts myself, toime afther toime. It's a grand idea and we'll be doin' ut sure if you'll stop your crazy notions — about — about bein' so sick.

YANK [*sadly*]: Too late. We shouldn'ta made this trip, and then — How'd all the fog git in here?

DRISCOLL: Fog?

YANK: Everything looks misty. Must be my eyes gittin' weak, I guess. What was we talkin' of a minute ago? Oh, yes, a farm. It's too late. [*His mind wandering.*] Argentine, did I say? D'yuh remember the times we've had in Buenos Aires? The moving pictures in Barracas? Some class to them, d'yuh remember?

DRISCOLL [*with satisfaction*]: I do that; and so does the piany player. He'll not be forgettin' the black eye I gave him in a hurry.

YANK: Remember the time we was there on the beach and had to go to Tommy Moore's boarding house to git shipped? And he sold us rotten oilskins and sea-boots full of holes, and shipped us on a skysail-yarder round the Horn

and took two months' pay for it. And the days we used to sit on the park benches along the Paseo Colon with the vigilantes lookin' hard at us? And the songs at the Sailor's Opera where the guy played ragtime — d'yuh remember them?

DRISCOLL: I do, surely.

YANK: And La Plata — phew, the stink of the hides! I always liked Argentine — all except that booze, caña. How drunk we used to git on that, remember?

DRISCOLL: Cud I forget ut? My head pains me at the menshun av that divil's brew.

YANK: Remember the night I went crazy with the heat in Singapore? And the time you was pinched by the cops in Port Said? And the time we was both locked up in Sydney for fightin'?

DRISCOLL: I do so.

YANK: And that fight on the dock at Cape Town — [*His voice betrays great inward perturbation.*]

DRISCOLL [*hastily*]: Don't be thinkin' av that now. 'Tis past and gone.

YANK: D'yuh think He'll hold it up against me?

DRISCOLL [*mystified*]: Who's that?

YANK: God. They say He sees everything. He must know it was done in fair fight, in self-defense, don't yuh think?

DRISCOLL: Av course. Ye stabbed him, and be damned to him, for the skulkin' swine he was, afther him tryin' to stick you in the back, and you not suspectin'. Let your conscience be aisy. I wisht I had nothin' blacker than that on my sowl. I'd not be afraid av the angel Gabriel himself.

YANK [*with a shudder*]: I c'd see him a minute ago with the blood spurtin' out of his neck. Ugh!

DRISCOLL: The fever, ut is, that makes you see such things. Give no heed to ut.

YANK [*uncertainly*]: You don't think He'll hold it up agin me — God, I mean.

DRISCOLL: If there's justice in hiven, no!

[*YANK seems comforted by this assurance.*]

YANK [*after a pause*]: We won't reach Cardiff for a week at least. I'll be buried at sea.

DRISCOLL [*putting his hands over his ears*]: Ssshh! I won't listen to you.

YANK [*as if he had not heard him*]: It's as good a place as any other, I s'pose — only I always wanted to be buried on dry land. But what the hell'll I care — then? [*Fretfully.*] Why should it be a rotten night like this with that damned whistle blowin' and people snorin' all round? I wish the stars was out, and the moon, too; I c'd lie out on deck and look at them, and it'd make it easier to go — somehow.

DRISCOLL: For the love av God don't be talkin' loike that!

YANK: Whatever pay's comin' to me yuh can divvy up with the rest of the boys; and you take my watch. It ain't worth much, but it's all I've got.

DRISCOLL: But have you no relations at all to call your own?

YANK: No, not as I know of. One thing I forgot: You know Fanny the barmaid at the Red Stork in Cardiff?

DRISCOLL: Sure, and who doesn't?

YANK: She's been good to me. She tried to lend me half a crown when I was broke there last trip. Buy her the biggest box of candy yuh c'n find in Cardiff. [*Breaking down — in a choking voice.*] It's hard to ship on this voyage I'm goin' on — alone! [DRISCOLL reaches out and grasps his hand. There is a pause, during which both fight to control themselves.] My throat's like a furnace. [*He gasps for air.*] Gimme a drink of water, will yuh, Drisc? [DRISCOLL gets him a dipper of water.] I wish this was a pint of beer. Oooohh! [*He chokes, his face convulsed with agony, his hands tearing at his shirt-front. The dipper falls from his nerveless fingers.*]

DRISCOLL: For the love av God, what is ut, Yank?

YANK [*speaking with tremendous difficulty*]: S'long, Drisc! [*He stares straight in front of him with eyes starting from their sockets.*] Who's that?

DRISCOLL: Who? What?

YANK [*faintly*]: A pretty lady dressed in black. [*His face twitches and his body writhes in a final spasm, then straightens out rigidly.*]

DRISCOLL [*pale with horror*]: Yank! Yank! Say a word to me for the love av hiven!

[*He shrinks away from the bunk, making the sign of the cross. Then comes back and puts a trembling hand on YANK's chest and bends closely over the body.*]

COCKY [*from the alleyway*]: Oh, Driscoll! Can you leave Yank for arf a mo' and give me a 'and?

DRISCOLL [*with a great sob*]: Yank!

[*He sinks down on his knees beside the bunk, his head on his hands. His lips move in some half-remembered prayer.*]

[COCKY enters, his oilskins and sou'wester glistening with drops of water.]

COCKY: The fog's lifted.

[COCKY sees DRISCOLL and stands staring at him with open mouth. DRISCOLL makes the sign of the cross again.]

COCKY [*mockingly*]: Sayin' 'is prayers!

[*He catches sight of the still figure in the bunk and an expression of awed understanding comes over his face. He takes off his dripping sou'wester and stands, scratching his head.*]

COCKY [*in a hushed whisper*]: Gawd blimey!

THE CURTAIN FALLS

QUESTIONS

1. Where is Cardiff? Is there any special reason for having the ship "Bound East —" instead of west?
2. What would strike a serious note for the *spectator* from the very beginning, in spite of the sailors' coarse jesting? In what ways does O'Neill suggest, even in this interior scene, the gray, dismal weather outside?
3. What significance do you see in the many different nationalities of the crew? Which of these minor characters, after Driscoll, is most individualized?
4. What does Driscoll's friendship with Yank add to the play? List actions (stage business) by Driscoll in the last twenty speeches.
5. What was Yank's last will and testament? What is the significance of the lifting of the fog and of Cocky's calling to Driscoll to give him a hand at the end of the play?

Henrik Ibsen

## An Enemy of the People

*Henrik Ibsen was the greatest and most influential dramatist of the nineteenth century. As a young reformer and poet he became disappointed with his native Norway and went to live in exile in Italy, later in Germany. There he wrote The Pillars of Society (1877), A Doll's House (1879), The Wild Duck (1884), and the other plays dealing with problems of politics and real life that were soon imitated throughout Europe. An Enemy of the People (1882), written in one year instead of the customary two, is Ibsen's reply to the critics of Ghosts (1881), his play about heredity and venereal disease. Dr. Stockmann, like Ibsen, is attacked for revealing the truth, but is not exactly a self-portrait. "The Doctor and I get on very well together, we agree on so many subjects," Ibsen said. "But the Doctor is a more muddle-headed person than I am."*

CHARACTERS

DOCTOR THOMAS STOCKMANN, *medical officer of the Baths.*

MRS. STOCKMANN, *his wife.*

PETRA, *their daughter, a teacher.*

ELIF  
 MORTEN

} *their sons, thirteen and ten years old respectively.*

Translated by Eleanor Marx-Aveling.

PETER STOCKMANN, *the doctor's elder brother, Burgomaster and chief of police, chairman of the Baths Committee, etc.*

MORTEN KIIL, *master tanner, Mrs. Stockmann's adoptive-father.*

HOVSTAD, *editor of the "People's Messenger."*

BILLING, *on the staff of the paper.*

HORSTER, *a ship's captain.*

ASLAKSEN, *a printer.*

*Participants in a meeting of citizens : all sorts and conditions of men, some women, and a band of schoolboys.*

*The action passes in a town on the South Coast of Norway.*

## ACT FIRST

*Evening. DR. STOCKMANN's sitting-room; simply but neatly decorated and furnished. In the wall to the right are two doors, the further one leading to the hall, the nearer one to the Doctor's study. In the opposite wall, facing the hall door, a door leading to the other rooms of the house. Against the middle of this wall stands the stove; further forward a sofa with a mirror above it, and in front of it an oval table with a cover. On the table a lighted lamp, with a shade. In the back wall an open door leading to the dining-room, in which is seen a supper-table, with a lamp on it.*

BILLING *is seated at the supper-table, with a napkin under his chin. MRS. STOCKMANN is standing by the table and placing before him a dish with a large joint of roast beef. The other seats round the table are empty; the table is in disorder, as after a meal.*

MRS. STOCKMANN: If you come an hour late, Mr. Billing, you must put up with a cold supper.

BILLING [*eating*]: It is excellent — really first rate.

MRS. STOCKMANN: You know how Stockmann insists on regular meal-hours —

BILLING: Oh, I don't mind at all. I almost think I enjoy my supper more when I can sit down to it like this, alone and undisturbed.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, well, if you enjoy it — [*Listening in the direction of the hall.*] I believe this is Mr. Hovstad coming too.

BILLING: Very likely.

BURGOMASTER STOCKMANN *enters, wearing an overcoat and an official gold-laced cap, and carrying a stick.*

BURGOMASTER: Good evening, sister-in-law.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming forward into the sitting-room*]: Oh, good evening; is it you? It is good of you to look in.

BURGOMASTER: I was just passing, and so — [*Looks towards the drawing-room.*] Ah, I see you have company.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*rather embarrassed*]: Oh no, not at all; it's the merest chance. [*Hurriedly.*] Won't you sit down and have a little supper?

BURGOMASTER: I? No, thank you. Good gracious! hot meat in the evening! That wouldn't suit my digestion.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, for once in a way ——

BURGOMASTER: No, no, — much obliged to you. I stick to tea and bread and butter. It's more wholesome in the long run — and rather more economical, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*smiling*]: You mustn't think Thomas and I are mere spend-thrifts, either.

BURGOMASTER: You are not, sister-in-law; far be it from me to say that. [*Pointing to the Doctor's study.*] Is he not at home?

MRS. STOCKMANN: No, he has gone for a little turn after supper — with the boys.

BURGOMASTER: I wonder if that is a good thing to do? [*Listening.*] There he is, no doubt.

MRS. STOCKMANN: No, that is not he. [*A knock.*] Come in!

HOVSTAD *enters from the hall.*

MRS. STOCKMANN: Ah, it's Mr. Hovstad ——

HOVSTAD: You must excuse me; I was detained at the printer's. Good evening, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER [*bowing rather stiffly*]: Mr. Hovstad? You come on business, I presume?

HOVSTAD: Partly. About an article for the paper.

BURGOMASTER: So I supposed. I hear my brother is an extremely prolific contributor to the *People's Messenger*.

HOVSTAD: Yes, when he wants to unburden his mind on one thing or another, he gives the *Messenger* the benefit.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*to HOVSTAD*]: But will you not ——?

[*Points to the dining-room.*]

BURGOMASTER: Well, well, I am far from blaming him for writing for the class of readers he finds most in sympathy with him. And, personally, I have no reason to bear your paper any ill-will, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD: No, I should think not.

BURGOMASTER: One may say, on the whole, that a fine spirit of mutual tolerance prevails in our town — an excellent public spirit. And that is because we have a great common interest to hold us together — an interest in which all right-minded citizens are equally concerned ——

HOVSTAD: Yes — the Baths.

BURGOMASTER: Just so. We have our magnificent new Baths. Mark my words! The whole life of the town will centre around the Baths, Mr. Hovstad. There can be no doubt of it!

MRS. STOCKMANN: That is just what Thomas says.

BURGOMASTER: How marvellously the place has developed, even in this couple of years! Money has come into circulation, and brought life and movement with it. Houses and ground-rents rise in value every day.

HOVSTAD: And there are fewer people out of work.

BURGOMASTER: That is true. There is a gratifying diminution in the burden imposed on the well-to-do classes by the poor-rates; and they will be still further lightened if only we have a really good summer this year — a rush of visitors — plenty of invalids, to give the Baths a reputation.

HOVSTAD: I hear there is every prospect of that.

BURGOMASTER: Things look most promising. Inquiries about apartments and so forth keep on pouring in.

HOVSTAD: Then the Doctor's paper will come in very opportunely.

BURGOMASTER: Has he been writing again?

HOVSTAD: This is a thing he wrote in the winter; enlarging on the virtues of the Baths, and on the excellent sanitary conditions of the town. But at that time I held it over.

BURGOMASTER: Ah — I suppose there was something not quite judicious about it?

HOVSTAD: Not at all. But I thought it better to keep it till the spring, when people are beginning to look about them, and think of their summer quarters —

BURGOMASTER: You were right, quite right, Mr. Hovstad.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, Thomas is really indefatigable where the Baths are concerned.

BURGOMASTER: It is his duty as one of the staff.

HOVSTAD: And of course he was really their creator.

BURGOMASTER: Was he? Indeed! I gather that certain persons are of that opinion. But I should have thought that I, too, had a modest share in that undertaking.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, that is what Thomas is always saying.

HOVSTAD: No one dreams of denying it, Burgomaster. You set the thing going, and put it on a practical basis; everybody knows that. I only meant that the original idea was the Doctor's.

BURGOMASTER: Yes, my brother has certainly had ideas enough in his time — worse luck! But when it comes to realising them, Mr. Hovstad, we want men of another stamp. I should have thought that in this house at any rate —

MRS. STOCKMANN: Why, my dear brother-in-law —

HOVSTAD: Burgomaster, how can you —?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do go in and have some supper, Mr. Hovstad; my husband is sure to be home directly.

HOVSTAD: Thanks; just a mouthful, perhaps.

*[He goes into the dining-room.]*

BURGOMASTER [*speaking in a low voice*]: It is extraordinary how people who spring direct from the peasant class never can get over their want of tact.

MRS. STOCKMANN: But why should you care? Surely you and Thomas can share the honour, like brothers.

BURGOMASTER: Yes, one would suppose so; but it seems a share of the honour is not enough for some persons.

MRS. STOCKMANN: What nonsense! You and Thomas always get on so well together. [*Listening.*] There, I think I hear him.

[*Goes and opens the door to the hall.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing and talking loudly, without*]: Here's another visitor for you, Katrina. Isn't it capital, eh? Come in, Captain Horster. Hang your coat on that peg. What! you don't wear an overcoat? Fancy, Katrina, I caught him in the street, and I could hardly get him to come in.

CAPTAIN HORSTER *enters and bows to* MRS. STOCKMANN.

DR. STOCKMANN [*in the doorway*]: In with you, boys. They're famishing again! Come along, Captain Horster; you must try our roast beef —

[*He forces HORSTER into the dining-room. EILIF and MORTEN follow them.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN: But, Thomas, don't you see —

DR. STOCKMANN [*turning round in the doorway*]: Oh, is that you, Peter! [*Goes up to him and holds out his hand.*] Now this is really capital.

BURGOMASTER: Unfortunately, I have only a moment to spare —

DR. STOCKMANN: Nonsense! We shall have some toddy in a minute. You're not forgetting the toddy, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Of course not; the water's boiling.

[*She goes into the dining-room.*]

BURGOMASTER: Toddy too —!

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes; sit down, and let's make ourselves comfortable.

BURGOMASTER: Thanks; I never join in drinking parties.

DR. STOCKMANN: But this isn't a party.

BURGOMASTER: I don't know what else — [*Looks towards the dining-room.*]

It's extraordinary how they can get through all that food.

DR. STOCKMANN [*rubbing his hands*]: Yes, doesn't it do one good to see young people eat? Always hungry! That's as it should be. They need good, solid meat to put stamina into them! It is they that have got to whip up the ferment of the future, Peter.

BURGOMASTER: May I ask what there is to be "whipped up," as you call it?

DR. STOCKMANN: You'll have to ask the young people that — when the time comes. We shan't see it, of course. Two old fogies like you and me —

BURGOMASTER: Come, come! Surely that is a very extraordinary expression to use —

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, you mustn't mind my nonsense, Peter. I'm in such glorious



spirits, you see. I feel so unspeakably happy in the midst of all this growing, germinating life. Isn't it a marvellous time we live in! It seems as though a whole new world were springing up around us.

BURGOMASTER: Do you really think so?

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course, you can't see it as clearly as I do. You have passed your life in the midst of it all; and that deadens the impression. But I who had to vegetate all those years in that little hole in the north, hardly ever seeing a soul that could speak a stimulating word to me — all this affects me as if I had suddenly dropped into the heart of some teeming metropolis.

BURGOMASTER: Well, metropolis —

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, I know well enough that things are on a small scale here, compared with many other places. But there's life here — there's promise — there's an infinity of things to work and strive for; and that is the main point. [*Calling.*] Katrina, haven't there been any letters?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*in the dining-room*]: No, none at all.

DR. STOCKMANN: And then a good income, Peter! That's a thing one learns to appreciate when one has lived on starvation wages —

BURGOMASTER: Good heavens —!

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, yes, I can tell you we often had hard times of it up there. And now we can live like princes! Today, for example, we had roast beef for dinner; and we've had some of it for supper too. Won't you have some? Come along — just look at it, at any rate —

BURGOMASTER: No, no; certainly not —

DR. STOCKMANN: Well then, look here — do you see we've bought a table-cover?

BURGOMASTER: Yes, so I observed.

DR. STOCKMANN: And a lamp-shade, too. Do you see? Katrina has been saving up for them. They make the room look comfortable, don't they? Come over here. No, no, no, not there. So — yes! Now you see how it concentrates the light —. I really think it has quite an artistic effect. Eh?

BURGOMASTER: Yes, when one can afford such luxuries —

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, I can afford it now. Katrina says I make almost as much as we spend.

BURGOMASTER: Ah — almost!

DR. STOCKMANN: Besides, a man of science must live in some style. Why, I believe a mere sheriff spends much more a year than I do.

BURGOMASTER: Yes, I should think so! A member of the superior magistracy —

DR. STOCKMANN: Well then, even a common shipowner! A man of that sort will get through many times as much —

BURGOMASTER: That is natural, in your relative positions.

DR. STOCKMANN: And after all, Peter, I really don't squander any money. But I can't deny myself the delight of having people about me. I must have them. After living so long out of the world, I find it a necessity of life to have bright,

cheerful, freedom-loving, hard-working young fellows around me — and that's what they are, all of them, that are sitting there eating so heartily. I wish you knew more of Hovstad —

BURGOMASTER: Ah, that reminds me — Hovstad was telling me that he is going to publish another article of yours.

DR. STOCKMANN: An article of mine?

BURGOMASTER: Yes, about the Baths. An article you wrote last winter.

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, that one! But I don't want that to appear for the present.

BURGOMASTER: Why not? It seems to me this is the very time for it.

DR. STOCKMANN: Very likely — under ordinary circumstances —

[*Crosses the room.*]

BURGOMASTER [*following him with his eyes*]: And what is unusual in the circumstances now?

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still*]: The fact is, Peter, I really cannot tell you just now; not this evening, at all events. There may prove to be a great deal that is unusual in the circumstances. On the other hand, there may be nothing at all. Very likely it's only my fancy.

BURGOMASTER: Upon my word, you are very enigmatical. Is there anything in the wind? Anything I am to be kept in the dark about? I should think, as Chairman of the Bath Committee —

DR. STOCKMANN: And I should think that I — Well, well, don't let us get our backs up, Peter.

BURGOMASTER: God forbid! I am not in the habit of "getting my back up," as you express it. But I must absolutely insist that all arrangements shall be made and carried out in a businesslike manner, and through the properly constituted authorities. I cannot be a party to crooked or underhand courses.

DR. STOCKMANN: Have I ever been given to crooked or underhand courses?

BURGOMASTER: At any rate you have an ingrained propensity to taking your own course. And that, in a well-ordered community, is almost as inadmissible. The individual must subordinate himself to society, or, more precisely, to the authorities whose business it is to watch over the welfare of society.

DR. STOCKMANN: Maybe. But what the devil has that to do with me?

BURGOMASTER: Why this is the very thing, my dear Thomas, that it seems you will never learn. But take care; you will have to pay for it — sooner or later. Now I have warned you. Good-bye.

DR. STOCKMANN: Are you stark mad? You're on a totally wrong track —

BURGOMASTER: I am not often on the wrong track. Moreover, I must protest against — [*Bowing towards dining-room.*] Good-bye, sister-in-law; good-day to you, gentlemen. [*He goes.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*entering the sitting-room*]: Has he gone?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, and in a fine temper, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Why, my dear Thomas, what have you been doing to him now?

DR. STOCKMANN: Nothing at all. He can't possibly expect me to account to him for everything — before the time comes.

MRS. STOCKMANN: What have you to account to him for?

DR. STOCKMANN: H'm; — never mind about that, Katrina. — It's very odd the postman doesn't come.

[HOVSTAD, BILLING, and HORSTER have risen from table and come forward into the sitting-room. EILIF and MORTEN presently follow.]

BILLING [*stretching himself*]: Ah! Strike me dead if one doesn't feel a new man after such a meal.

HOVSTAD: The Burgomaster didn't seem in the best of tempers this evening.

DR. STOCKMANN: That's his stomach. He has a very poor digestion.

HOVSTAD: I fancy it's the staff of the *Messenger* he finds it hardest to stomach.

MRS. STOCKMANN: I thought you got on well enough with him.

HOVSTAD: Oh, yes; but it's only a sort of armistice between us.

BILLING: That's it. That word sums up the situation.

DR. STOCKMANN: We must remember that Peter is a lonely bachelor, poor devil!

He has no home to be happy in; only business, business. And then all that cursèd weak tea he goes and pours down his throat! Now then, chairs round the table, boys! Katrina, shan't we have the toddy now?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*going towards the dining-room*]: I am just getting it.

DR. STOCKMANN: And you, Captain Horster, sit beside me on the sofa. So rare a guest as you — Sit down, gentlemen, sit down.

[*The men sit round the table; MRS. STOCKMANN brings in a tray with kettle, glasses, decanters, etc.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN: Here you have it: here's arrak, and this is rum, and this cognac. Now, help yourselves.

DR. STOCKMANN [*taking a glass*]: So we will. [*While the toddy is being mixed.*]

And now out with the cigars. Eilif, I think you know where the box is. And Morten, you may fetch my pipe. [*The boys go into the room on the right.*] I have a suspicion that Eilif sneaks a cigar now and then, but I pretend not to notice.

[*Calls.*] And my smoking-cap, Morten! Katrina, can't you tell him where I left it? Ah, he's got it. [*The boys bring in the things.*] Now, friends, help yourselves. I stick to my pipe, you know; — this one has been on many a stormy journey with me, up there in the north. [*They clink glasses.*] Your health!

Ah, I can tell you it's better fun to sit cosily here, safe from wind and weather.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*who sits knitting*]: Do you sail soon, Captain Horster?

HORSTER: I hope to be ready for a start by next week.

MRS. STOCKMANN: And you're going to America?

HORSTER: Yes, that's the intention.

BILLING: But then you'll miss the election of the new Town Council.

HORSTER: Is there to be an election again?

BILLING: Didn't you know?

HORSTER: No, I don't trouble myself about those things.

BILLING: But I suppose you take an interest in public affairs?

HORSTER: No, I don't understand anything about them.

BILLING: All the same, one ought at least to vote.

HORSTER: Even those who don't understand anything about it?

BILLING: Understand? Why, what do you mean by that? Society is like a ship: every man must put his hand to the helm.

HORSTER: That may be all right on shore; but at sea it wouldn't do at all.

HOVSTAD: It's remarkable how little sailors care about public affairs as a rule.

BILLING: Most extraordinary.

DR. STOCKMANN: Sailors are like birds of passage; they are at home both in the south and in the north. So it behoves the rest of us to be all the more energetic, Mr. Hovstad. Will there be anything of public interest in the *People's Messenger* tomorrow?

HOVSTAD: Nothing of local interest. But the day after tomorrow I think of printing your article —

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, confound it, that article! No, you'll have to hold it over.

HOVSTAD: Really? We happen to have plenty of space, and I should say this was the very time for it —

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, yes, you may be right; but you must hold it over all the same. I shall explain to you by-and-by.

PETRA, *wearing a hat and cloak, and with a number of exercise-books under her arm, enters from the hall.*

PETRA: Good evening.

DR. STOCKMANN: Good evening, Petra. Is that you?

[*General greetings. PETRA puts her cloak, hat, and books on a chair by the door.*]

PETRA: Here you all are, enjoying yourselves, while I've been out slaving.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well then, you come and enjoy yourself too.

BILLING: May I mix you a little —?

PETRA [*coming towards the table*]: Thank you, I'd rather help myself — you always make it too strong. By the way, father, I have a letter for you.

[*Goes to the chair where her things are lying.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: A letter! From whom?

PETRA [*searching in the pocket of her cloak*]: I got it from the postman just as I was going out —

DR. STOCKMANN [*rising and going towards her*]: And you only bring it me now?

PETRA: I really hadn't time to run up again. Here it is.

DR. STOCKMANN [*seizing the letter*]: Let me see, let me see, child. [*Reads the address.*] Yes; this is it —!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Is it the one you have been so anxious about, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, it is. I must go at once. Where shall I find a light, Katrina?

Is there no lamp in my study again!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes — the lamp is lighted. It's on the writing-table.

DR. STOCKMANN: Good, good. Excuse me one moment —

*[He goes into the room on the right.]*

PETRA: What can it be, mother?

MRS. STOCKMANN: I don't know. For the last few days he has been continually on the look-out for the postman.

BILLING: Probably a country patient —

PETRA: Poor father! He'll soon have far too much to do. *[Mixes her toddy.]* Ah, this will taste good!

HOVSTAD: Have you been teaching in the night school as well today?

PETRA *[sipping from her glass]*: Two hours.

BILLING: And four hours in the morning at the institute —

PETRA *[sitting down by the table]*: Five hours.

MRS. STOCKMANN: And I see you have exercises to correct this evening.

PETRA: Yes, a heap of them.

HORSTER: It seems to me you have plenty to do, too.

PETRA: Yes; but I like it. You feel so delightfully tired after it.

BILLING: Do you like that?

PETRA: Yes, for then you sleep so well.

MORTEN: I say, Petra, you must be a great sinner.

PETRA: A sinner?

MORTEN: Yes, if you work so hard. Mr. Rørlund says work is a punishment for our sins.

EILIF *[contemptuously]*: Bosh! What a silly you are, to believe such stuff as that.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Come, come, Eilif.

BILLING *[laughing]*: Capital, capital!

HOVSTAD: Should you not like to work so hard, Morten?

MORTEN: No, I shouldn't.

HOVSTAD: Then what will you do with yourself in the world?

MORTEN: I should like to be a Viking.

EILIF: But then you'd have to be a heathen.

MORTEN: Well, so I would.

BILLING: There I agree with you, Morten! I say just the same thing.

MRS. STOCKMANN *[making a sign to him]*: No, no, Mr. Billing, I'm sure you don't.

BILLING: Strike me dead but I do, though. I am a heathen, and I'm proud of it.

You'll see we shall all be heathens soon.

MORTEN: And shall we be able to do anything we like then?

BILLING: Well, you see, Morten —

MRS. STOCKMANN: Now run away, boys; I'm sure you have lessons to prepare for tomorrow.

EILIF: You might let me stay just a little longer ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: No, you must go too. Be off, both of you.

*[The boys say good-night and go into the room on the left.]*

HOVSTAD: Do you really think it can hurt the boys to hear these things?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Well, I don't know; I don't like it.

PETRA: Really, mother, I think you are quite wrong there.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Perhaps. But I don't like it — not here, at home.

PETRA: There's no end of hypocrisy both at home and at school. At home you must hold your tongue, and at school you have to stand up and tell lies to the children.

HORSTER: Have you to tell lies?

PETRA: Yes; do you think we don't have to tell them many and many a thing we don't believe ourselves?

BILLING: Ah, that's too true.

PETRA: If only I could afford it, I should start a school myself, and things should be very different there.

BILLING: Oh, afford it ——!

HORSTER: If you really think of doing that, Miss Stockmann, I shall be delighted to let you have a room at my place. You know my father's old house is nearly empty; there's a great big dining-room on the ground floor ——

PETRA *[laughing]*: Oh, thank you very much — but I'm afraid it won't come to anything.

HOVSTAD: No, I fancy Miss Petra is more likely to go over to journalism. By the way, have you had time to look into the English novel you promised to translate for us?

PETRA: Not yet. But you shall have it in good time.

DR. STOCKMANN *enters from his room, with the letter open in his hand.*

DR. STOCKMANN *[flourishing the letter]*: Here's news, I can tell you, that will waken up the town!

BILLING: News?

MRS. STOCKMANN: What news?

DR. STOCKMANN: A great discovery, Katrina!

HOVSTAD: Indeed?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Made by you?

DR. STOCKMANN: Precisely — by me! *[Walks up and down.]* Now let them go on accusing me of fads and crack-brained notions. But they won't dare to! Ha-ha! I tell you they won't dare!

PETRA: Do tell us what it is, father.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, well, give me time, and you shall hear all about it. If only I had Peter here now! This just shows how we men can go about forming judgments like the blindest moles ——

HOVSTAD: What do you mean, doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN [*stopping beside the table*]: Isn't it the general opinion that our town is a healthy place?

HOVSTAD: Of course.

DR. STOCKMANN: A quite exceptionally healthy place, indeed — a place to be warmly recommended, both to invalids and people in health —

MRS. STOCKMANN: My dear Thomas —

DR. STOCKMANN: And assuredly we haven't failed to recommend and belaud it. I've sung its praises again and again, both in the *Messenger* and in pamphlets —

HOVSTAD: Well, what then?

DR. STOCKMANN: These Baths, that we have called the pulse of the town, its vital nerve, and — and the devil knows what else —

BILLING: "Our city's palpitating heart," I once ventured to call them in a convivial moment —

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, I dare say. Well — do you know what they really are, these mighty, magnificent, belauded Baths, that have cost so much money — do you know what they are?

HOVSTAD: No, what are they?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do tell us.

DR. STOCKMANN: Simply a pestiferous hole.

PETRA: The Baths, father?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*at the same time*]: Our Baths!

HOVSTAD [*also at the same time*]: But, Doctor —!

BILLING: Oh, it's incredible!

DR. STOCKMANN: I tell you the whole place is a poisonous whited sepulchre; noxious in the highest degree! All that filth up there in the Mill Dale — the stuff that smells so horribly — taints the water in the feed-pipes of the Pump-Room; and the same accursed poisonous refuse oozes out by the beach —

HOVSTAD: Where the sea-baths are?

DR. STOCKMANN: Exactly.

HOVSTAD: But how are you so sure of all this, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN: I've investigated the whole thing as conscientiously as possible. I've long had my suspicions about it. Last year we had some extraordinary cases of illness among the patients — both typhoid and gastric attacks —

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, I remember.

DR. STOCKMANN: We thought at the time that the visitors had brought the infection with them; but afterwards — last winter — I began to question that. So I set about testing the water as well as I could.

MRS. STOCKMANN: It was that you were working so hard at!

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, you may well say I've worked, Katrina. But here, you know, I hadn't the necessary scientific appliances; so I sent samples both of

our drinking water and of our sea-water to the University, for exact analysis by a chemist.

HOVSTAD: And you have received his report?

DR. STOCKMANN [*showing letter*]: Here it is! And it proves beyond dispute the presence of putrefying organic matter in the water — millions of infusoria.

It's absolutely pernicious to health, whether used internally or externally.

MRS. STOCKMANN: What a blessing you found it out in time.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, you may well say that.

HOVSTAD: And what do you intend to do now, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, to set things right, of course.

HOVSTAD: You think it can be done, then?

DR. STOCKMANN: It must be done. Else the whole Baths are useless, ruined. But there's no fear. I am quite clear as to what is required.

MRS. STOCKMANN: But, my dear Thomas, why should you have made such a secret of all this?

DR. STOCKMANN: Would you have had me rush all over the town and chatter about it, before I was quite certain? No, thank you; I'm not so mad as that.

PETRA: But to us at home —

DR. STOCKMANN: I couldn't say a word to a living soul. But tomorrow you may look in at the Badger's —

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, well, at your grandfather's. The old fellow will be astonished! He thinks I'm not quite right in my head — yes, and plenty of others think the same, I've noticed. But now these good people shall see — yes, they shall see now! [*Walks up and down rubbing his hands.*] What a stir there will be in the town, Katrina! Just think of it! All the water-pipes will have to be relaid.

HOVSTAD [*rising*]: All the water-pipes —?

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, of course. The intake is too low down; it must be moved much higher up.

PETRA: So you were right, after all.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, do you remember, Petra? I wrote against it when they were beginning the works. But no one would listen to me then. Now, you may be sure, I shall give them my full broadside — for of course I've prepared a statement for the Directors; it has been lying ready a whole week; I've only been waiting for this report. [*Points to letter.*] But now they shall have it at once. [*Goes into his room and returns with a MS. in his hand.*] See! Four closely-written sheets! And I'll enclose the report. A newspaper, Katrina! Get me something to wrap them up in. There — that's it. Give it to — to — [*Stamps.*] — what the devil's her name? Give it to the girl, I mean, and tell her to take it at once to the Burgomaster.

[*MRS. STOCKMANN goes out with the packet through the dining-room.*]



PETRA: What do you think Uncle Peter will say, father?

DR. STOCKMANN: What should he say? He can't possibly be otherwise than pleased that so important a fact has been brought to light.

HOVSTAD: I suppose you will let me put a short announcement of your discovery in the *Messenger*.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, I shall be much obliged if you will.

HOVSTAD: It is highly desirable that the public should know about it as soon as possible.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, certainly.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*returning*]: She's gone with it.

BILLING: Strike me dead if you won't be the first man in the town, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN [*walks up and down in high glee*]: Oh, nonsense! After all, I have done no more than my duty. I've been a lucky treasure-hunter, that's all. But all the same —

BILLING: Hovstad, don't you think the town ought to get up a torchlight procession in honour of Dr. Stockmann?

HOVSTAD: I shall certainly propose it.

BILLING: And I'll talk it over with Aslaksen.

DR. STOCKMANN: No, my dear friends; let all such claptrap alone. I won't hear of anything of the sort. And if the Directors should want to raise my salary, I won't accept it. I tell you, Katrina, I will not accept it.

MRS. STOCKMANN: You are quite right, Thomas.

PETRA [*raising her glass*]: Your health, father!

HOVSTAD and BILLING: Your health, your health, Doctor!

HORSTER [*clinking glasses with the DOCTOR*]: I hope you may have nothing but joy of your discovery.

DR. STOCKMANN: Thanks, thanks, my dear friends! I can't tell you how happy I am —! Oh, what a blessing it is to feel that you have deserved well of your native town and your fellow citizens. Hurrah, Katrina!

[*He puts both his arms round her neck, and whirls her round with him. MRS. STOCKMANN screams and struggles. A burst of laughter, applause, and cheers for the DOCTOR. The boys thrust their heads in at the door.*]

## ACT SECOND

*The DOCTOR's sitting-room. The dining-room door is closed. Morning.*

MRS. STOCKMANN [*enters from the dining-room with a sealed letter in her hand, goes to the foremost door on the right, and peeps in*]: Are you there, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN [*within*]: Yes, I have just come in. [*Enters.*] What is it?

MRS. STOCKMANN: A letter from your brother. [*Hands it to him.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Aha, let us see. [*Opens the envelope and reads.*] "The MS. sent me is returned herewith ——" [*Reads on, mumbling to himself.*] H'm ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: Well, what does he say?

DR. STOCKMANN [*putting the paper in his pocket*]: Nothing; only that he'll come up himself about midday.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Then be sure you remember to stay at home.

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, I can easily manage that; I've finished my morning's visits.

MRS. STOCKMANN: I am very curious to know how he takes it.

DR. STOCKMANN: You'll see he won't be over-pleased that it is I that have made the discovery, and not he himself.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Ah, that's just what I'm afraid of.

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course at bottom he'll be glad. But still — Peter is damnably unwilling that anyone but himself should do anything for the good of the town.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do you know, Thomas, I think you might stretch a point, and share the honour with him. Couldn't it appear that it was he that put you on the track ——?

DR. STOCKMANN: By all means, for aught I care. If only I can get things put straight ——

*Old MORTEN KIIL puts his head in at the hall door, and asks slyly.*

MORTEN KIIL: Is it — is it true?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*going towards him*]: Father — is that you?

DR. STOCKMANN: Hallo, father-in-law! Good morning, good morning.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do come in.

MORTEN KIIL: Yes, if it's true; if not, I'm off again.

DR. STOCKMANN: If what is true?

MORTEN KIIL: This crazy business about the water-works. Now, is it true?

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, of course it is. But how came you to hear of it?

MORTEN KIIL [*coming in*]: Petra looked in on her way to the school ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, did she?

MORTEN KIIL: Ay, ay — and she told me —— I thought she was only making game of me; but that's not like Petra either.

DR. STOCKMANN: No, indeed; how could you think so?

MORTEN KIIL: Oh, you can never be sure of anybody. You may be made a fool of before you know where you are. So it is true, after all?

DR. STOCKMANN: Most certainly it is. Do sit down, father-in-law. [*Forces him down on the sofa.*] Now isn't it a real blessing for the town ——?

MORTEN KIIL [*suppressing his laughter*]: A blessing for the town?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, that I made this discovery in time ——

MORTEN KIIL [*as before*]: Ay, ay, ay! — Well, I could never have believed that you would play monkey-tricks with your very own brother.

DR. STOCKMANN: Monkey-tricks!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Why, father dear ——

MORTEN KIIL [*resting his hands and chin on the top of his stick and blinking slyly*]

at the DOCTOR]: What was it again? Wasn't it that some animals had got into the water-pipes?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes; infusorial animals.

MORTEN KIIL: And any number of these animals had got in, Petra said — whole swarms of them.

DR. STOCKMANN: Certainly; hundreds of thousands.

MORTEN KIIL: But no one can see them — isn't that it?

DR. STOCKMANN: Quite right; no one can see them.

MORTEN KIIL [*with a quiet, chuckling laugh*]: I'll be damned if that isn't the best thing I've heard of you yet.

DR. STOCKMANN: What do you mean?

MORTEN KIIL: But you'll never in this world make the Burgomaster take in anything of the sort.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, that we shall see.

MORTEN KIIL: Do you really think he'll be so crazy?

DR. STOCKMANN: I hope the whole town will be so crazy.

MORTEN KIIL: The whole town! Well, I don't say but it may. But it serves them right; it'll teach them a lesson. They wanted to be so much cleverer than we old fellows. They hounded me out of the Town Council. Yes; I tell you they hounded me out like a dog, that they did. But now it's their turn. Just you keep up the game with them, Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, but, father-in-law —

MORTEN KIIL: Keep it up, I say. [*Rising.*] If you can make the Burgomaster and his gang eat humble pie, I'll give a hundred crowns straight away to the poor.

DR. STOCKMANN: Come, that's good of you.

MORTEN KIIL: Of course I've little enough to throw away; but if you can manage that, I shall certainly remember the poor at Christmas-time, to the tune of fifty crowns.

*HOVSTAD enters from the hall.*

HOVSTAD: Good morning! [*Pausing.*] Oh! I beg your pardon —

DR. STOCKMANN: Not at all. Come in, come in.

MORTEN KIIL [*chuckling again*]: He! Is he in it too?

HOVSTAD: What do you mean?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, of course he is.

MORTEN KIIL: I might have known it! It's to go into the papers. Ah, you're the one, Stockmann! Do you two lay your heads together; I'm off.

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh no; don't go yet, father-in-law.

MORTEN KIIL: No, I'm off now. Play them all the monkey-tricks you can think of. Deuce take me but you shan't lose by it.

*[He goes, MRS. STOCKMANN accompanying him.]*

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing*]: What do you think —? The old fellow doesn't believe a word of all this about the water-works.

HOVSTAD: Was that what he ——?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes; that was what we were talking about. And I dare say you have come on the same business?

HOVSTAD: Yes. Have you a moment to spare, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN: As many as you like, my dear fellow.

HOVSTAD: Have you heard anything from the Burgomaster?

DR. STOCKMANN: Not yet. He'll be here presently.

HOVSTAD: I have been thinking the matter over since last evening.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well?

HOVSTAD: To you, as a doctor and a man of science, this business of the water-works appears an isolated affair. I dare say it hasn't occurred to you that a good many other things are bound up with it?

DR. STOCKMANN: Indeed! In what way? Let us sit down, my dear fellow. — No; there, on the sofa.

[HOVSTAD *sits on sofa: the DOCTOR in an easy-chair on the other side of the table.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, so you think ——?

HOVSTAD: You said yesterday that the water is polluted by impurities in the soil.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, undoubtedly; the mischief comes from that poisonous swamp up in the Mill Dale.

HOVSTAD: Excuse me, Doctor, but I think it comes from a very different swamp.

DR. STOCKMANN: What swamp may that be?

HOVSTAD: The swamp in which our whole municipal life is rotting.

DR. STOCKMANN: The devil, Mr. Hovstad! What notion is this you've got hold of?

HOVSTAD: All the affairs of the town have gradually drifted into the hands of a pack of bureaucrats ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Come now, they're not all bureaucrats.

HOVSTAD: No; but those who are not are the friends and adherents of those who are. We are entirely under the thumb of a ring of wealthy men, men of old family and position in the town.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, but they are also men of ability and insight.

HOVSTAD: Did they show ability and insight when they laid the water-pipes where they are?

DR. STOCKMANN: No; that, of course, was a piece of stupidity. But that will be set right now.

HOVSTAD: Do you think it will go so smoothly?

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, smoothly or not, it will have to be done.

HOVSTAD: Yes, if the press exerts its influence.

DR. STOCKMANN: Not at all necessary, my dear fellow; I am sure my brother ——

HOVSTAD: Excuse me, Doctor, but I must tell you that I think of taking the matter up.

DR. STOCKMANN: In the paper?

HOVSTAD: Yes. When I took over the *People's Messenger*, I was determined to break up the ring of obstinate old blockheads who held everything in their hands.

DR. STOCKMANN: But you told me yourself what came of it. You nearly ruined the paper.

HOVSTAD: Yes, at that time we had to draw in our horns, that's true enough. The whole Bath scheme might have fallen through if these men had been sent about their business. But now the Baths are an accomplished fact, and we can get on without these august personages.

DR. STOCKMANN: Get on without them, yes; but still we owe them a great deal.

HOVSTAD: The debt shall be duly acknowledged. But a journalist of my democratic tendencies cannot let such an opportunity slip through his fingers. We must explode the tradition of official infallibility. That rubbish must be got rid of, like every other superstition.

DR. STOCKMANN: There I am with you with all my heart, Mr. Hovstad. If it's a superstition, away with it!

HOVSTAD: I should be sorry to attack the Burgomaster, as he is your brother. But I know you think with me — the truth before all other considerations.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, of course. [*Vehemently.*] But still —! but still ——!

HOVSTAD: You mustn't think ill of me. I am neither more self-interested nor more ambitious than other men.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, my dear fellow — who says you are?

HOVSTAD: I come of humble folk, as you know; and I have had ample opportunities of seeing what the lower classes really require. And that is to have a share in the direction of public affairs, Doctor. That is what develops ability and knowledge and self-respect ——

DR. STOCKMANN: I understand that perfectly.

HOVSTAD: Yes; and I think a journalist incurs a heavy responsibility if he lets slip a chance of helping to emancipate the downtrodden masses. I know well enough that our oligarchy will denounce me as an agitator, and so forth; but what do I care? If only my conscience is clear, I ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Just so, just so, my dear Mr. Hovstad. But still — deuce take it ——! [*A knock at the door.*] Come in!

ASLAKSEN, the printer, appears at the door leading to the hall. He is humbly but respectably dressed in black, wears a white necktie, slightly crumpled, and has a silk hat and gloves in his hand.

ASLAKSEN [*bowing*]: I beg pardon, Doctor, for making so bold ——

DR. STOCKMANN [*rising*]: Hallo! If it isn't Mr. Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN: Yes, it's me, Doctor.

HOVSTAD [*rising*]: Is it me you want, Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN: No, not at all. I didn't know you were here. No, it's the Doctor himself —

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, what can I do for you?

ASLAKSEN: Is it true, what Mr. Billing tells me, that you're going to get us a better set of water-works?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, for the Baths.

ASLAKSEN: Of course, of course. Then I just looked in to say that I'll back up the movement with all my might.

HOVSTAD [*to the DOCTOR*]: You see!

DR. STOCKMANN: I'm sure I thank you heartily; but —

ASLAKSEN: You may find it no such bad thing to have us small middle-class men at your back. We form what you may call a compact majority in the town — when we really make up our minds, that's to say. And it's always well to have the majority with you, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: No doubt, no doubt; but I can't conceive that any special measures will be necessary in this case. I should think in so clear and straightforward a matter —

ASLAKSEN: Yes, but all the same, it can do no harm. I know the local authorities very well — the powers that be are not over-ready to adopt suggestions from outsiders. So I think it wouldn't be amiss if we made some sort of a demonstration.

HOVSTAD: Precisely my opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN: A demonstration, you say? But in what way would you demonstrate?

ASLAKSEN: Of course with great moderation, Doctor. I always insist upon moderation; for moderation is a citizen's first virtue — at least that's my way of thinking.

DR. STOCKMANN: We all know that, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN: Yes, I think my moderation is generally recognised. And this affair of the water-works is very important for us small middle-class men. The Baths bid fair to become, as you might say, a little gold-mine for the town. We shall all have to live by the Baths, especially we house-owners. So we want to support the Baths all we can; and as I am Chairman of the House-owners' Association —

DR. STOCKMANN: Well —?

ASLAKSEN: And as I'm an active worker for the Temperance Society — of course you know, Doctor, that I'm a temperance man?

DR. STOCKMANN: To be sure, to be sure.

ASLAKSEN: Well, you'll understand that I come in contact with a great many people. And as I'm known to be a prudent and law-abiding citizen, as you yourself remarked, Doctor, I have a certain influence in the town, and hold some power in my hands — though I say it that shouldn't.

DR. STOCKMANN: I know that very well, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN: Well then, you see — it would be easy for me to get up an address, if it came to a pinch.

DR. STOCKMANN: An address?

ASLAKSEN: Yes, a kind of vote of thanks to you, from the citizens of the town, for your action in a matter of such general concern. Of course it will have to be drawn up with all fitting moderation, so as to give no offence to the authorities and parties in power. But so long as we're careful about that, no one can take it ill, I should think.

HOVSTAD: Well, even if they didn't particularly like it —

ASLAKSEN: No, no, no; no offence to the powers that be, Mr. Hovstad. No opposition to people that can take it out of us again so easily. I've had enough of that in my time; no good ever comes of it. But no one can object to the free but temperate expression of a citizen's opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN [*shaking his hand*]: I can't tell you, my dear Mr. Aslaksen, how heartily it delights me to find so much support among my fellow townsmen. I'm so happy — so happy! Come, you'll have a glass of sherry? Eh?

ASLAKSEN: No, thank you; I never touch spirituous liquors.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, then, a glass of beer — what do you say to that?

ASLAKSEN: Thanks, not that either, Doctor. I never take anything so early in the day. And now I'll be off round the town, and talk to some of the house-owners, and prepare public opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN: It's extremely kind of you, Mr. Aslaksen; but I really cannot get it into my head that all these preparations are necessary. The affair seems to me so simple and self-evident.

ASLAKSEN: The authorities always move slowly, Doctor — God forbid I should blame them for it —

HOVSTAD: We'll stir them up in the paper tomorrow, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN: No violence, Mr. Hovstad. Proceed with moderation, or you'll do nothing with them. Take my advice; I've picked up experience in the school of life. — And now I'll say good morning, Doctor. You know now that at least you have us small middle-class men behind you, solid as a wall. You have the compact majority on your side, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: Many thanks, my dear Mr. Aslaksen. [*Holds out his hand.*] Good-bye, good-bye.

ASLAKSEN: Are you coming to the office, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD: I shall come on presently. I have still one or two things to arrange.

ASLAKSEN: Very well.

[*Bows and goes. DR. STOCKMANN accompanies him into the hall.*]

HOVSTAD [*as the DOCTOR re-enters*]: Well, what do you say to that, Doctor? Don't you think it is high time we should give all this weak-kneed, half-hearted cowardice a good shaking up?

DR. STOCKMANN: Are you speaking of Aslaksen?

HOVSTAD: Yes, I am. He's a decent enough fellow, but he's one of those who are sunk in the swamp. And most people here are just like him; they are for ever wavering and wobbling from side to side; what with scruples and misgivings, they never dare advance a step.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, but Aslaksen seems to me thoroughly well-intentioned.

HOVSTAD: There is one thing I value more than good intentions, and that is an attitude of manly self-reliance.

DR. STOCKMANN: There I am quite with you.

HOVSTAD: So I am going to seize this opportunity, and try whether I can't for once put a little grit into their good intentions. The worship of authority must be rooted up in this town. This gross, inexcusable blunder of the water-works must be brought home clearly to every voter.

DR. STOCKMANN: Very well. If you think it's for the good of the community, so be it; but not till I have spoken to my brother.

HOVSTAD: At all events, I shall be writing my leader in the meantime. And if the Burgomaster won't take the matter up —

DR. STOCKMANN: But how can you conceive his refusing?

HOVSTAD: Oh, it's not inconceivable. And then —

DR. STOCKMANN: Well then, I promise you —; look here — in that case you may print my paper — put it in just as it is.

HOVSTAD: May I? Is that a promise?

DR. STOCKMANN [*handing him the manuscript*]: There it is; take it with you. You may as well read it in any case; you can return it to me afterwards.

HOVSTAD: Very good; I shall do so. And now, good-bye, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: Good-bye, good-bye. You'll see it will all go smoothly, Mr. Hovstad — as smoothly as possible.

HOVSTAD: H'm — we shall see. [*Bows and goes out through the hall.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*going to the dining-room door and looking in*]: Katrina! Hallo! are you back, Petra?

PETRA [*entering*]: Yes, I've just got back from school.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*entering*]: Hasn't he been here yet?

DR. STOCKMANN: Peter? No; but I have been having a long talk with Hovstad. He's quite enthusiastic about my discovery. It turns out to be of much wider import than I thought at first. So he has placed his paper at my disposal, if I should require it.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do you think you will?

DR. STOCKMANN: Not I! But at the same time, one cannot but be proud to know that the enlightened, independent press is on one's side. And what do you think? I have had a visit from the Chairman of the House-owners' Association too.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Really? What did he want?



DR. STOCKMANN: To assure me of his support. They will all stand by me at a pinch. Katrina, do you know what I have behind me?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Behind you? No. What have you behind you?

DR. STOCKMANN: The compact majority!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh! Is that good for you, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, indeed; I should think it was good. [*Rubbing his hands as he walks up and down.*] Great God! what a delight it is to feel oneself in such brotherly unison with one's fellow townsmen!

PETRA: And to do so much that's good and useful, father!

DR. STOCKMANN: And all for one's native town, too!

MRS. STOCKMANN: There's the bell.

DR. STOCKMANN: That must be he. [*Knock at the door.*] Come in!

*Enter BURGOMASTER STOCKMANN from the hall.*

BURGOMASTER: Good morning.

DR. STOCKMANN: I'm glad to see you, Peter.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Good morning, brother-in-law. How are you?

BURGOMASTER: Oh, thanks, so-so. [*To the DOCTOR.*] Yesterday evening, after office hours, I received from you a dissertation upon the state of the water at the Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes. Have you read it?

BURGOMASTER: I have.

DR. STOCKMANN: And what do you think of the affair?

BURGOMASTER: H'm —

[*With a sidelong glance.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN: Come, Petra.

[*She and PETRA go into the room on the left.*]

BURGOMASTER [*after a pause*]: Was it necessary to make all these investigations behind my back?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, till I was absolutely certain, I —

BURGOMASTER: And are you absolutely certain now?

DR. STOCKMANN: My paper must surely have convinced you of that.

BURGOMASTER: Is it your intention to submit this statement to the Board of Directors, as a sort of official document?

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course. Something must be done in the matter, and that promptly.

BURGOMASTER: As usual, you use very strong expressions in your statement. Amongst other things, you say that what we offer our visitors is a slow poison.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, Peter, what else can it be called? Only think — poisoned water both internally and externally! And that to poor invalids who come to us in all confidence, and pay us handsomely to cure them!

BURGOMASTER: And then you announce as your conclusion that we must build

a sewer to carry off the alleged impurities from the Mill Dale, and must re-lay all the water-pipes.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes. Can you suggest any other plan? — I know of none.

BURGOMASTER: I found a pretext for looking in at the town engineer's this morning, and — in a half-jesting way — I mentioned these alterations as things we might possibly have to consider, at some future time.

DR. STOCKMANN: At some future time!

BURGOMASTER: Of course he smiled at what he thought my extravagance. Have you taken the trouble to think what your proposed alterations would cost? From what the engineers said, I gathered that the expenses would probably mount up to several hundred thousand crowns.

DR. STOCKMANN: So much as that?

BURGOMASTER: Yes. But that is not the worst. The work would take at least two years.

DR. STOCKMANN: Two years! Do you mean to say two whole years?

BURGOMASTER: At least. And what are we to do with the Baths in the meanwhile? Are we to close them? We should have no alternative. Do you think anyone would come here, if it got abroad that the water was pestilential?

DR. STOCKMANN: But, Peter, that's precisely what it is.

BURGOMASTER: And all this now, just now, when the Baths are doing so well! Neighbouring towns, too, are not without their claims to rank as health-resorts. Do you think they would not at once set to work to divert the full stream of visitors to themselves? Undoubtedly they would; and we should be left stranded. We should probably have to give up the whole costly undertaking; and so you would have ruined your native town.

DR. STOCKMANN: I — ruined —!

BURGOMASTER: It is only through the Baths that the town has any future worth speaking of. You surely know that as well as I do.

DR. STOCKMANN: Then what do you think should be done?

BURGOMASTER: I have not succeeded in convincing myself that the condition of the water at the Baths is as serious as your statement represents.

DR. STOCKMANN: I tell you it's if anything worse — or will be in the summer, when the hot weather sets in.

BURGOMASTER: I repeat that I believe you exaggerate greatly. A competent physician should know what measures to take — he should be able to obviate deleterious influences, and to counteract them in case they should make themselves unmistakably felt.

DR. STOCKMANN: Indeed —? And then —?

BURGOMASTER: The existing water-works are, once for all, a fact, and must naturally be treated as such. But when the time comes, the Directors will probably not be indisposed to consider whether it may not be possible, without unreasonable pecuniary sacrifices, to introduce certain improvements.

DR. STOCKMANN: And do you imagine I could ever be a party to such dishonesty?

BURGOMASTER: Dishonesty?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, it would be dishonesty — a fraud, a lie, an absolute crime against the public, against society as a whole!

BURGOMASTER: I have not, as I before remarked, been able to convince myself that there is really any such imminent danger.

DR. STOCKMANN: You have! You must have! I know that my demonstration is absolutely clear and convincing. And you understand it perfectly, Peter, only you won't admit it. It was you who insisted that both the Bath-buildings and the water-works should be placed where they now are; and it's that — it's that damned blunder that you won't confess. Pshaw! Do you think I don't see through you?

BURGOMASTER: And even if it were so? If I do watch over my reputation with a certain anxiety, I do it for the good of the town. Without moral authority I cannot guide and direct affairs in the way I consider most conducive to the general welfare. Therefore — and on various other grounds — it is of great moment to me that your statement should not be submitted to the Board of Directors. It must be kept back, for the good of the community. Later on I will bring up the matter for discussion, and we will do the best we can, quietly; but not a word, not a whisper, of this unfortunate business must come to the public ears.

DR. STOCKMANN: But it can't be prevented now, my dear Peter.

BURGOMASTER: It must and shall be prevented.

DR. STOCKMANN: It can't be, I tell you; far too many people know about it already.

BURGOMASTER: Know about it! Who? Surely not those fellows on the *People's Messenger* —?

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, yes; they know. The liberal, independent press will take good care that you do your duty.

BURGOMASTER [*after a short pause*]: You are an amazingly reckless man, Thomas. Have not you reflected what the consequences of this may be to yourself?

DR. STOCKMANN: Consequences? — Consequences to me?

BURGOMASTER: Yes — to you and yours.

DR. STOCKMANN: What the devil do you mean?

BURGOMASTER: I believe I have always shown myself ready and willing to lend you a helping hand.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, you have, and I thank you for it.

BURGOMASTER: I ask for no thanks. Indeed, I was in some measure forced to act as I did — for my own sake. I always hoped I should be able to keep you a little in check, if I helped to improve your pecuniary position.

DR. STOCKMANN: What! So it was only for your own sake ——!

BURGOMASTER: In a measure, I say. It is painful for a man in an official position, when his nearest relative goes and compromises himself time after time.

DR. STOCKMANN: And you think I do that?

BURGOMASTER: Yes, unfortunately, you do, without knowing it. Yours is a turbulent, unruly, rebellious spirit. And then you have an unhappy propensity for rushing into print upon every possible and impossible occasion. You no sooner hit upon an idea than you must needs write a newspaper article or a whole pamphlet about it.

DR. STOCKMANN: Isn't it a citizen's duty, when he has conceived a new idea, to communicate it to the public!

BURGOMASTER: Oh, the public has no need for new ideas. The public gets on best with the good old recognised ideas it has already.

DR. STOCKMANN: You say that right out!

BURGOMASTER: Yes, I must speak frankly to you for once. Hitherto I have tried to avoid it, for I know how irritable you are; but now I must tell you the truth, Thomas. You have no conception how much you injure yourself by your officiousness. You complain of the authorities, ay, of the Government itself — you cry them down and maintain that you have been slighted, persecuted. But what else can you expect, with your impossible disposition?

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, indeed! So I am impossible, am I?

BURGOMASTER: Yes, Thomas, you are an impossible man to work with. I know that from experience. You have no consideration for anyone or anything; you seem quite to forget that you have me to thank for your position as medical officer of the Baths ——

DR. STOCKMANN: It was mine by right! Mine, and no one else's! I was the first to discover the town's capabilities as a watering-place; I saw them, and, at that time, I alone. For years I fought single-handed for this idea of mine; I wrote and wrote ——

BURGOMASTER: No doubt; but then the right time had not come. Of course, in that out-of-the-world corner, you could not judge of that. As soon as the propitious moment arrived, I — and others — took the matter in hand ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, and you went and bungled the whole of my glorious plan. Oh, we see now what a set of wiseacres you were!

BURGOMASTER: All I can see is that you are again seeking an outlet for your pugnacity. You want to make an onslaught on your superiors — that is an old habit of yours. You cannot endure any authority over you; you look askance at anyone who holds a higher post than your own; you regard him as a personal enemy — and then you care nothing what kind of weapon you use against him. But now I have shown you how much is at stake for the town, and consequently for me too. And therefore I warn you, Thomas, that I am inexorable in the demand I am about to make of you!

DR. STOCKMANN: What demand?

BURGOMASTER: As you have not had the sense to refrain from chattering to outsiders about this delicate business, which should have been kept an official secret, of course it cannot now be hushed up. All sorts of rumours will get abroad, and evil-disposed persons will invent all sorts of additions to them. It will therefore be necessary for you publicly to contradict these rumours.

DR. STOCKMANN: I! How? I don't understand you!

BURGOMASTER: We expect that, after further investigation, you will come to the conclusion that the affair is not nearly so serious or pressing as you had at first imagined.

DR. STOCKMANN: Aha! So you expect that?

BURGOMASTER: Furthermore, we expect you to express your confidence that the Board of Directors will thoroughly and conscientiously carry out all measures for the remedying of any possible defects.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, but that you'll never be able to do, so long as you go on tinkering and patching. I tell you that, Peter; and it's my deepest, sincerest conviction ——

BURGOMASTER: As an official, you have no right to hold any individual conviction.

DR. STOCKMANN [*starting*]: No right to ——?

BURGOMASTER: As an official, I say. In your private capacity, of course, it is another matter. But as a subordinate official of the Baths, you have no right to express any conviction at issue with that of your superiors.

DR. STOCKMANN: This is too much! I, a doctor, a man of science, have no right to ——!

BURGOMASTER: The matter in question is not a purely scientific one; it is a complex affair; it has both a technical and an economic side.

DR. STOCKMANN: What the devil do I care what it is! I will be free to speak my mind upon any subject under the sun!

BURGOMASTER: As you please — so long as it does not concern the Baths. With them we forbid you to meddle.

DR. STOCKMANN [*shouts*]: You forbid ——! You! A set of ——

BURGOMASTER: I forbid it — I, your chief; and when I issue an order, you have simply to obey.

DR. STOCKMANN [*controlling himself*]: Upon my word, Peter, if you weren't my brother ——

PETRA [*tears open the door*]: Father, you shan't submit to this!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*following her*]: Petra, Petra!

BURGOMASTER: Ah! So we have been listening!

MRS. STOCKMANN: The partition is so thin, we couldn't help ——

PETRA: I stood and listened on purpose.

BURGOMASTER: Well, on the whole, I am not sorry ——

DR. STOCKMANN [*coming nearer to him*]: You spoke to me of forbidding and obeying ——

BURGOMASTER: You have forced me to adopt that tone.

DR. STOCKMANN: And am I to give myself the lie, in a public declaration?

BURGOMASTER: We consider it absolutely necessary that you should issue a statement in the terms indicated.

DR. STOCKMANN: And if I do not obey?

BURGOMASTER: Then we shall ourselves put forth a statement to reassure the public.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well and good; then I shall write against you. I shall stick to my point and prove that *I* am right, and you wrong. And what will you do then?

BURGOMASTER: Then I shall be unable to prevent your dismissal.

DR. STOCKMANN: What ——!

PETRA: Father! Dismissal!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Dismissal!

BURGOMASTER: Your dismissal from the Baths. I shall be compelled to move that notice be given you at once, and that you have henceforth no connection whatever with the Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN: You would dare to do that!

BURGOMASTER: It is you who are playing the daring game.

PETRA: Uncle, this is a shameful way to treat a man like father!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do be quiet, Petra!

BURGOMASTER [*looking at PETRA*]: Aha! We have opinions of our own already, eh? To be sure, to be sure! [*To MRS. STOCKMANN.*] Sister-in-law, you are presumably the most rational member of this household. Use all your influence with your husband; try to make him realise what all this will involve both for his family ——

DR. STOCKMANN: My family concerns myself alone!

BURGOMASTER: —— both for his family, I say, and for the town he lives in.

DR. STOCKMANN: It is I that have the real good of the town at heart! I want to lay bare the evils that, sooner or later, must come to light. Ah! You shall see whether I love my native town.

BURGOMASTER: You, who, in your blind obstinacy, want to cut off the town's chief source of prosperity!

DR. STOCKMANN: That source is poisoned, man! Are you mad? We live by trafficking in filth and corruption! The whole of our flourishing social life is rooted in a lie!

BURGOMASTER: Idle fancies — or worse. The man who scatters broadcast such offensive insinuations against his native place must be an enemy of society.

DR. STOCKMANN [*going towards him*]: You dare to ——!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*throwing herself between them*]: Thomas!

PETRA [*seizing her father's arm*]: Keep calm, father!

BURGOMASTER: I will not expose myself to violence. You have had your warning now. Reflect upon what is due to yourself and to your family. Good-bye.  
[*He goes.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*walking up and down*]: And I must put up with such treatment!

In my own house, Katrina! What do you say to that!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Indeed, it's a shame and a disgrace, Thomas ——

PETRA: Oh, if I could only get hold of uncle ——!

DR. STOCKMANN: It's my own fault. I ought to have stood up against them long ago — to have shown my teeth — and used them too! — And to be called an enemy of society! Me! I won't bear it; by Heaven, I won't!

MRS. STOCKMANN: But my dear Thomas, after all, your brother has the power  
——

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, but I have the right.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Ah, yes, right, right! What good does it do to have the right, if you haven't any might?

PETRA: Oh, mother — how can you talk so?

DR. STOCKMANN: What! No good, in a free community, to have right on your side? What an absurd idea, Katrina! And besides — haven't I the free and independent press before me — and the compact majority at my back? That is might enough, I should think!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Why, good heavens, Thomas! you're surely not thinking of  
——?

DR. STOCKMANN: What am I not thinking of?

MRS. STOCKMANN: —— of setting yourself up against your brother, I mean.

DR. STOCKMANN: What the devil would you have me do, if not stick to what is right and true?

PETRA: Yes, that's what I should like to know.

MRS. STOCKMANN: But it will be of no earthly use. If they won't, they won't.

DR. STOCKMANN: Ho-ho, Katrina! just wait a while, and you shall see whether I can fight my battles to the end.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, to the end of getting your dismissal; that is what will happen.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well then, I shall at any rate have done my duty towards the public, towards society — I who am called an enemy of society!

MRS. STOCKMANN: But towards your family, Thomas? Towards us at home? Do you think that is doing your duty towards those who are dependent on you?

PETRA: Oh, mother, don't always think first of us.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, it's easy for you to talk; you can stand alone if need be.  
— But remember the boys, Thomas; and think a little of yourself too, and of me ——

DR. STOCKMANN: You're surely out of your senses, Katrina! If I were to be such

a pitiful coward as to knuckle under to this Peter and his confounded crew — should I ever have another happy hour in all my life?

MRS. STOCKMANN: I don't know about that; but God preserve us from the happiness we shall all of us have if you persist in defying them. There you will be again, with nothing to live on, with no regular income. I should have thought we had had enough of that in the old days. Remember them, Thomas; think of what it all means.

DR. STOCKMANN [*struggling with himself and clenching his hands*]: And this is what these jacks-in-office can bring upon a free and honest man! Isn't it revolting, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, no doubt they are treating you shamefully. But God knows there's plenty of injustice one must just submit to in this world. — Here are the boys, Thomas. Look at them! What is to become of them? Oh, no, no! you can never have the heart —

EILIF and MORTEN, with school-books, have meanwhile entered.

DR. STOCKMANN: The boys —! [*With a sudden access of firmness and decision.*] Never, though the whole earth should crumble, will I bow my neck beneath the yoke. [*Goes towards his room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*following him*]: Thomas — what are you going to do?

DR. STOCKMANN [*at the door*]: I must have the right to look my boys in the face when they have grown into free men.

[*Goes into his room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*bursts into tears*]: Ah, God help us all!

PETRA: Father is true to the core. He will never give in!

[*The boys ask wonderingly what it all means; PETRA signs to them to be quiet.*]

### ACT THIRD

*The Editor's Room of the People's Messenger. In the background, to the left, an entrance-door; to the right another door, with glass panes, through which can be seen the composing-room. A door in the right-hand wall. In the middle of the room a large table covered with papers, newspapers, and books. In front, on the left, a window, and by it a desk with a high stool. A couple of arm-chairs beside the table; some other chairs along the walls. The room is dingy and cheerless, the furniture shabby, the armchairs dirty and torn. In the composing-room are seen a few compositors at work; further back, a hand-press in operation.*

HOVSTAD is seated at the desk, writing. Presently BILLING enters from the right, with the DOCTOR'S manuscript in his hand.

BILLING: Well, I must say —!

HOVSTAD [*writing*]: Have you read it through?

BILLING [*laying the MS. on the desk*]: Yes, I should think I had.



HOVSTAD: Don't you think the Doctor comes out strong?

BILLING: Strong! Why, strike me dead if he isn't crushing! Every word falls like a — well, like a sledge-hammer.

HOVSTAD: Yes, but these fellows won't collapse at the first blow.

BILLING: True enough; but we'll keep on hammering away, blow after blow, till the whole officialdom comes crashing down. As I sat in there reading that article, I seemed to hear the revolution thundering afar.

HOVSTAD [*turning round*]: Hush! Don't let Aslaksen hear that.

BILLING [*in a lower voice*]: Aslaksen's a white-livered, cowardly fellow, without a spark of manhood in him. But this time you'll surely carry your point? Eh? You'll print the Doctor's paper?

HOVSTAD: Yes, if only the Burgomaster doesn't give in —

BILLING: That would be deuced annoying.

HOVSTAD: Well, whatever happens, fortunately we can turn the situation to account. If the Burgomaster won't agree to the Doctor's proposal, he'll have all the small middle-class down upon him — all the House-owners' Association, and the rest of them. And if he does agree to it, he'll fall out with the whole crew of big shareholders in the Baths, who have hitherto been his main support —

BILLING: Yes, of course; for no doubt they'll have to fork out a lot of money —

HOVSTAD: You may take your oath of that. And then, don't you see, when the ring is broken up, we'll din it into the public day by day that the Burgomaster is incompetent in every respect, and that all responsible positions in the town, the whole municipal government in short, must be entrusted to men of liberal ideas.

BILLING: Strike me dead if that isn't the square truth! I see it — I see it: we are on the eve of a revolution! [*A knock at the door.*]

HOVSTAD: Hush! [*Calls.*] Come in!

DR. STOCKMANN *enters from the back, left.*

HOVSTAD [*going towards him*]: Ah, here is the Doctor. Well?

DR. STOCKMANN: Print away, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD: So it has come to that?

BILLING: Hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN: Print away, I tell you. To be sure it has come to that. Since they will have it so, they must. War is declared, Mr. Billing!

BILLING: War to the knife, say I! War to the death, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN: This article is only the beginning. I have four or five others sketched out in my head already. But where do you keep Aslaksen?

BILLING [*calling into the printing-room*]: Aslaksen! just come here a moment.

HOVSTAD: Four or five more articles, eh? On the same subject?

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, no — not at all, my dear fellow. No; they will deal with

quite different matters. But they're all of a piece with the water-works and sewer question. One thing leads to another. It's just like beginning to pick at an old house, don't you know?

BILLING: Strike me dead, but that's true! You feel you can't leave off till you've pulled the whole lumber-heap to pieces.

ASLAKSEN [*enters from the printing-room*]: Pulled to pieces! Surely the Doctor isn't thinking of pulling the Baths to pieces?

HOVSTAD: Not at all. Don't be alarmed.

DR. STOCKMANN: No, we were talking of something quite different. Well, what do you think of my article, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD: I think it's simply a masterpiece —

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, isn't it? I'm glad you think so — very glad.

HOVSTAD: It's so clear and to the point. One doesn't in the least need to be a specialist to understand the gist of it. I am certain every intelligent man will be on your side.

ASLAKSEN: And all the prudent ones too, I hope?

BILLING: Both the prudent and imprudent — in fact, almost the whole town.

ASLAKSEN: Then I suppose we may venture to print it.

DR. STOCKMANN: I should think so!

HOVSTAD: It shall go in tomorrow.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, plague take it, not a day must be lost. Look here, Mr. Aslaksen, this is what I wanted to ask you: won't you take personal charge of the article?

ASLAKSEN: Certainly I will.

DR. STOCKMANN: Be as careful as if it were gold. No printers' errors; every word is important. I shall look in again presently; perhaps you'll be able to let me see a proof. — Ah! I can't tell you how I long to have the thing in print — to see it launched —

BILLING: Yes, like a thunderbolt!

DR. STOCKMANN: — and submitted to the judgment of every intelligent citizen. Oh, you have no idea what I have had to put up with today. I've been threatened with all sorts of things. I was to be robbed of my clearest rights as a human being —

BILLING: What! Your rights as a human being!

DR. STOCKMANN: — I was to humble myself, and eat the dust; I was to set my personal interests above my deepest, holiest convictions —

BILLING: Strike me dead, but that's too outrageous.

HOVSTAD: Oh, what can you expect from that quarter?

DR. STOCKMANN: But they shall find they were mistaken in me; they shall learn that in black and white, I promise them! I shall throw myself into the breach every day in the *Messenger*, bombard them with one explosive article after another —

ASLAKSEN: Yes, but look here ——

BILLING: Hurrah! It's war! War!

DR. STOCKMANN: I shall smite them to the earth, I shall crush them, I shall level their entrenchments to the ground in the eyes of all right-thinking men! That's what I shall do!

ASLAKSEN: But above all things be temperate, Doctor; bombard with moderation ——

BILLING: Not at all, not at all! Don't spare the dynamite!

DR. STOCKMANN [*going on imperturbably*]: For now it's no mere question of water-works and sewers, you see. No, the whole community must be purged, disinfected ——

BILLING: There sounds the word of salvation!

DR. STOCKMANN: All the old bunglers must be sent packing, you understand. And that in every possible department! Such endless vistas have opened out before me today. I am not quite clear about everything yet, but I shall see my way presently. It's young and vigorous standard-bearers we must look for, my friends; we must have new captains at all the outposts.

BILLING: Hear, hear!

DR. STOCKMANN: And if only we hold together, it will go so smoothly, so smoothly! The whole revolution will glide off the stocks just like a ship. Don't you think so?

HOVSTAD: For my part, I believe we have now every prospect of placing our municipal affairs in the right hands.

ASLAKSEN: And if only we proceed with moderation, I really don't think there can be any danger.

DR. STOCKMANN: Who the devil cares whether there's danger or not! What I do, I do in the name of truth and for conscience' sake.

HOVSTAD: You are a man to be backed up, Doctor.

ASLAKSEN: Yes, there's no doubt the Doctor is a true friend to the town; he's what I call a friend of society.

BILLING: Strike me dead if Dr. Stockmann isn't a Friend of the People, Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN: I have no doubt the House-owners' Association will soon adopt that expression.

DR. STOCKMANN [*shaking their hands, deeply moved*]: Thanks, thanks, my dear, faithful friends; it does me good to hear you. My respected brother called me something very different. Never mind! Trust me to pay him back with interest! But I must be off now to see a poor devil of a patient. I shall look in again, though. Be sure you look after the article, Mr. Aslaksen; and, whatever you do, don't leave out any of my notes of exclamation! Rather put in a few more! Well, good-bye for the present, good-bye, good-bye.

[*Mutual salutations while they accompany him to the door. He goes out.*]

HOVSTAD: He will be invaluable to us.

ASLAKSEN: Yes, so long as he confines himself to this matter of the Baths. But if he goes further, it will scarcely be advisable to follow him.

HOVSTAD: H'm — that entirely depends on —

BILLING: You're always so confoundedly timid, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN: Timid? Yes, when it's a question of attacking local authorities, I am timid, Mr. Billing; I have learnt caution in the school of experience, let me tell you. But start me on the higher politics, confront me with the Government itself, and then see if I'm timid.

BILLING: No, you're not; but that's just where your inconsistency comes in.

ASLAKSEN: The fact is, I am keenly alive to my responsibilities. If you attack the Government, you at least do society no harm; for the men attacked don't care a straw, you see — they stay where they are all the same. But local authorities can be turned out; and then we might get some incompetent set into power, to the irreparable injury both of house-owners and other people.

HOVSTAD: But the education of citizens by self-government — do you never think of that?

ASLAKSEN: When a man has solid interests to protect, he can't think of everything, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD: Then I hope I may never have solid interests to protect.

BILLING: Hear, hear!

ASLAKSEN [*smiling*]: H'm! [*Points to the desk.*] Governor Stensgård sat in that editorial chair before you.

BILLING [*spitting*]: Pooh! A turncoat like that!

HOVSTAD: I am no weathercock — and never will be.

ASLAKSEN: A politician should never be too sure of anything on earth, Mr. Hovstad. And as for you, Mr. Billing, you ought to take in a reef or two, I should say, now that you are applying for the secretaryship to the Town Council.

BILLING: I ——!

HOVSTAD: Is that so, Billing?

BILLING: Well, yes — but, deuce take it, you understand, I'm only doing it to spite their high-mightinesses.

ASLAKSEN: Well, that has nothing to do with me. But if I am to be accused of cowardice and inconsistency, I should just like to point out this: My political record is open to everyone. I have not changed at all, except in becoming more moderate. My heart still belongs to the people; but I don't deny that my reason inclines somewhat towards the authorities — the local ones, I mean.

[*Goes into the printing-room.*]

BILLING: Don't you think we should try to get rid of him, Hovstad?

HOVSTAD: Do you know of anyone else that will pay for our paper and printing?

BILLING: What a confounded nuisance it is to have no capital!

HOVSTAD [*sitting down by the desk*]: Yes, if we only had that ——

BILLING: Suppose you applied to Dr. Stockmann?

HOVSTAD [*turning over his papers*]: What would be the good? He hasn't a rap.  
 BILLING: No; but he has a good man behind him — old Morten Kiil — "The Badger," as they call him.

HOVSTAD [*writing*]: Are you so sure he has money?

BILLING: Yes, strike me dead if he hasn't! And part of it must certainly go to Stockmann's family. He's bound to provide for — for the children at any rate.

HOVSTAD [*half turning*]: Are you counting on that?

BILLING: Counting? How should I be counting on it?

HOVSTAD: Best not! And that secretaryship you shouldn't count on either; for I can assure you you won't get it.

BILLING: Do you think I don't know that? A refusal is the very thing I want. Such a rebuff fires the spirit of opposition in you, gives you a fresh supply of gall, as it were; and that's just what you need in a god-forsaken hole like this, where anything really stimulating so seldom happens.

HOVSTAD [*writing*]: Yes, yes.

BILLING: Well — they shall soon hear from me! — Now I'll go and write the appeal to the House-owners' Association.

[*Goes into the room on the right.*]

HOVSTAD [*sits at his desk, biting his penholder, and says slowly*]: H'm — so that's the way of it. — [*A knock at the door.*] Come in.

PETRA *enters from the back, left.*

HOVSTAD [*rising*]: What! Is it you? Here?

PETRA: Yes; please excuse me —

HOVSTAD [*offering her an arm-chair*]: Won't you sit down?

PETRA: No, thanks; I must go again directly.

HOVSTAD: Perhaps you bring a message from your father —?

PETRA: No, I have come on my own account. [*Takes a book from the pocket of her cloak.*] Here is that English story.

HOVSTAD: Why have you brought it back?

PETRA: Because I won't translate it.

HOVSTAD: But you promised —

PETRA: Yes; but then I hadn't read it. I suppose you have not read it either?

HOVSTAD: No; you know I can't read English; but —

PETRA: Exactly; and that's why I wanted to tell you that you must find something else. [*Putting the book on the table.*] This will never do for the *Messenger*.

HOVSTAD: Why not?

PETRA: Because it flies in the face of all your convictions.

HOVSTAD: Well, for that matter —

PETRA: You don't understand me. It makes out that a supernatural power looks after the so-called good people in this world, and turns everything to their advantage at last; while all the so-called bad people are punished.

HOVSTAD: Yes, but that's all right. That's the very thing the public like.

PETRA: And would you supply the public with such stuff? You don't believe a word of it yourself. You know well enough that things do not really happen like that.

HOVSTAD: Of course not; but an editor can't always do as he likes. He has often to humour people's fancies in minor matters. After all, politics is the chief thing in life — at any rate for a newspaper; and if I want the people to follow me along the path of emancipation and progress, I mustn't scare them away. If they find a moral story like this down in the cellar, they are all the more ready to take in what we tell them above — they feel themselves safer.

PETRA: For shame! You're not such a hypocrite as to set traps like that for your readers. You're not a spider.

HOVSTAD [*smiling*]: Thanks for your good opinion. It's true that the idea is Billing's, not mine.

PETRA: Mr. Billing's!

HOVSTAD: Yes, at least he was talking in that strain the other day. It was Billing that was so anxious to get the story into the paper; I don't even know the book.

PETRA: But how can Mr. Billing, with his advanced views —

HOVSTAD: Well, Billing is many-sided. He's applying for the secretaryship to the Town Council, I hear.

PETRA: I don't believe that, Mr. Hovstad. How could he descend to such a thing?

HOVSTAD: That you must ask him.

PETRA: I could never have thought it of Billing!

HOVSTAD [*looking more closely at her*]: No? Is it such a surprise to you?

PETRA: Yes. And yet — perhaps not. Oh, I don't know —

HOVSTAD: We journalists are not worth much, Miss Petra.

PETRA: Do you really say that?

HOVSTAD: I think so, now and then.

PETRA: Yes, in the little every-day squabbles — that I can understand. But now that you have taken up a great cause —

HOVSTAD: You mean this affair of your father's?

PETRA: Of course. I should think you must feel yourself worth more than the general run of people now.

HOVSTAD: Yes, today I do feel something of the sort.

PETRA: Yes, surely you must. Oh, it's a glorious career you have chosen! To be the pioneer of unrecognised truths and new and daring ways of thought! — even, if that were all, to stand forth fearlessly in support of an injured man —

HOVSTAD: Especially when the injured man is — I hardly know how to put it —

PETRA: You mean when he is so upright and true?

HOVSTAD [*in a low voice*]: I mean — especially when he is your father.

PETRA [*suddenly taken aback*]: That?

HOVSTAD: Yes, Petra — Miss Petra.

PETRA: So that is your chief thought, is it? Not the cause itself? Not the truth?

Not father's great, warm heart?

HOVSTAD: Oh, that too, of course.

PETRA: No, thank you; you said too much that time, Mr. Hovstad. Now I shall never trust you again, in anything.

HOVSTAD: Can you be so hard on me because it's mainly for your sake ——?

PETRA: What I blame you for is that you have not acted straightforwardly towards father. You have talked to him as if you cared only for the truth and the good of the community. You have trifled with both father and me. You are not the man you pretended to be. And that I will never forgive you — never.

HOVSTAD: You shouldn't say that so bitterly, Miss Petra — least of all now.

PETRA: Why not now?

HOVSTAD: Because your father cannot do without my help.

PETRA [*measuring him from head to foot*]: So you are capable of that, too? Oh, shame!

HOVSTAD: No, no. I spoke without thinking. You mustn't believe that of me.

PETRA: I know what to believe. Good-bye.

*ASLAKSEN enters from printing-room, hurriedly and mysteriously.*

ASLAKSEN: What do you think, Mr. Hovstad — [*Seeing PETRA.*] Ow, that's awkward ——

PETRA: Well, there is the book. You must give it to someone else.

[*Going towards the main door.*]

HOVSTAD [*following her*]: But, Miss Petra ——

PETRA: Good-bye.

[*She goes.*]

ASLAKSEN: I say, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD: Well, well; what is it?

ASLAKSEN: The Burgomaster's out there, in the printing-office.

HOVSTAD: The Burgomaster?

ASLAKSEN: Yes. He wants to speak to you; he came in by the back way — he didn't want to be seen, you understand.

HOVSTAD: What can be the meaning of this? Stop, I'll go myself ——

[*Goes towards the printing-room, opens the door, bows and invites the BURGOMASTER to enter.*]

HOVSTAD: Keep a look-out, Aslaksen, that no one ——

ASLAKSEN: I understand.

[*Goes into the printing-room.*]

BURGOMASTER: You didn't expect to see me here, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD: No, I cannot say that I did.

BURGOMASTER [*looking about him*]: You are very comfortably installed here — capital quarters.

HOVSTAD: Oh —

BURGOMASTER: And here have I come, without with your leave or by your leave, to take up your time —

HOVSTAD: You are very welcome, Burgomaster; I am at your service. Let me take your cap and stick. [*He does so, and puts them on a chair.*] And won't you be seated?

BURGOMASTER [*sitting down by the table*]: Thanks. [*HOVSTAD also sits by the table.*] I have been much — very much worried today, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD: Really? Well, I suppose with all your various duties, Burgomaster —

BURGOMASTER: It is the Doctor that has been causing me annoyance today.

HOVSTAD: Indeed! The Doctor?

BURGOMASTER: He has written a sort of memorandum to the Directors about some alleged shortcomings in the Baths.

HOVSTAD: Has he really?

BURGOMASTER: Yes; hasn't he told you? I thought he said —

HOVSTAD: Oh, yes, by-the-bye, he did mention something —

ASLAKSEN [*from the printing-office*]: I've just come for the manuscript —

HOVSTAD [*in a tone of vexation*]: Oh! — there it is on the desk.

ASLAKSEN [*finding it*]: All right.

BURGOMASTER: Why, that is the very thing —

ASLAKSEN: Yes, this is the Doctor's article, Burgomaster.

HOVSTAD: Oh, is that what you were speaking of?

BURGOMASTER: Precisely. What do you think of it?

HOVSTAD: I have no technical knowledge of the matter, and I've only glanced through it.

BURGOMASTER: And yet you are going to print it!

HOVSTAD: I can't very well refuse a signed communication —

ASLAKSEN: I have nothing to do with the editing of the paper, Burgomaster —

BURGOMASTER: Of course not.

ASLAKSEN: I merely print what is placed in my hands.

BURGOMASTER: Quite right, quite right.

ASLAKSEN: So I must —

[*Goes towards the printing-room.*]

BURGOMASTER: No, stop a moment, Mr. Aslaksen. With your permission, Mr. Hovstad —

HOVSTAD: By all means, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER: You are a discreet and thoughtful man, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN: I am glad you think so, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER: And a man of very wide influence.

ASLAKSEN: Well — chiefly among the lower middle-class.



BURGOMASTER: The small taxpayers form the majority — here as everywhere.

ASLAKSEN: That's very true.

BURGOMASTER: And I have no doubt that you know the general feeling among them. Am I right?

ASLAKSEN: Yes, I think I may say that I do, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER: Well — since our townfolk of the poorer class appear to be so heroically eager to make sacrifices —

ASLAKSEN: How so?

HOVSTAD: Sacrifices?

BURGOMASTER: It is a pleasing evidence of public spirit — a most pleasing evidence. I admit it is more than I should quite have expected. But, of course, you know public feeling better than I do.

ASLAKSEN: Yes, but, Burgomaster —

BURGOMASTER: And assuredly it is no small sacrifice the town will have to make.

HOVSTAD: The town?

ASLAKSEN: But I don't understand —. It's the Baths —

BURGOMASTER: At a rough provisional estimate, the alterations the Doctor thinks desirable will come to two or three hundred thousand crowns.

ASLAKSEN: That's a lot of money; but —

BURGOMASTER: Of course we shall be obliged to raise a municipal loan.

HOVSTAD [*rising*]: You surely can't mean that the town —?

ASLAKSEN: Would you come upon the rates? Upon the scanty savings of the lower middle-class?

BURGOMASTER: Why, my dear Mr. Aslaksen, where else are the funds to come from?

ASLAKSEN: The proprietors of the Baths must see to that.

BURGOMASTER: The proprietors are not in a position to go to any further expense.

ASLAKSEN: Are you quite sure of that, Burgomaster?

BURGOMASTER: I have positive information. So if these extensive alterations are called for, the town itself will have to bear the cost.

ASLAKSEN: Oh, plague take it all — I beg your pardon! — but this is quite another matter, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD: Yes, it certainly is.

BURGOMASTER: The worst of it is, that we shall be obliged to close the establishment for a couple of years.

HOVSTAD: To close it? Completely?

ASLAKSEN: For two years!

BURGOMASTER: Yes, the work will require that time — at least.

ASLAKSEN: But, damn it all! we can't stand that, Burgomaster. What are we house-owners to live on in the meantime?

BURGOMASTER: It's extremely difficult to say, Mr. Aslaksen. But what would you

have us do? Do you think a single visitor will come here if we go about making them fancy that the water is poisoned, that the place is pestilential, that the whole town —

ASLAKSEN: And it's all nothing but fancy?

BURGOMASTER: With the best will in the world, I have failed to convince myself that it is anything else.

ASLAKSEN: In that case it's simply inexcusable of Dr. Stockmann — I beg your pardon, Burgomaster, but —

BURGOMASTER: I'm sorry to say you are only speaking the truth, Mr. Aslaksen.

Unfortunately, my brother has always been noted for his rashness.

ASLAKSEN: And yet you want to back him up in this, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD: But who could possibly imagine that —?

BURGOMASTER: I have drawn up a short statement of the facts, as they appear from a sober-minded standpoint; and I have intimated that any drawbacks that may possibly exist can no doubt be remedied by measures compatible with the finances of the Baths.

HOVSTAD: Have you the article with you, Burgomaster?

BURGOMASTER [*feeling in his pockets*]: Yes; I brought it with me, in case you —

ASLAKSEN [*quickly*]: Plague take it, there he is!

BURGOMASTER: Who? My brother?

HOVSTAD: Where? where?

ASLAKSEN: He's coming through the composing-room.

BURGOMASTER: Most unfortunate! I don't want to meet him here, and yet there are several things I want to talk to you about.

HOVSTAD [*pointing to the door on the right*]: Go in there for a moment.

BURGOMASTER: But —?

HOVSTAD: You'll find nobody but Billing there.

ASLAKSEN: Quick, quick, Burgomaster; he's just coming.

BURGOMASTER: Very well, then. But try to get rid of him quickly.

[*He goes out by the door on the right, which ASLAKSEN opens, and closes behind him.*]

HOVSTAD: Pretend to be busy, Aslaksen.

[*He sits down and writes. ASLAKSEN turns over a heap of newspapers on a chair, right.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*entering from the composing-room*]: Here I am, back again.  
[*Puts down his hat and stick.*]

HOVSTAD [*writing*]: Already, Doctor? Make haste with what we were speaking of, Aslaksen. We've no time to lose today.

DR. STOCKMANN [*to ASLAKSEN*]: No proof yet, I hear.

ASLAKSEN [*without turning round*]: No; how could you expect it?

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course not; but you understand my impatience. I can have no rest or peace until I see the thing in print.

HOVSTAD: H'm; it will take a good while yet. Don't you think so, Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN: I'm afraid it will.

DR. STOCKMANN: All right, all right, my good friend; then I shall look in again. I'll look in twice if necessary. With so much at stake — the welfare of the whole town — one mustn't grudge a little trouble. [*Is on the point of going but stops and comes back.*] Oh, by the way — there's one other thing I must speak to you about.

HOVSTAD: Excuse me; wouldn't some other time ——?

DR. STOCKMANN: I can tell you in two words. You see it's this: when people read my article in the paper tomorrow, and find I have spent the whole winter working quietly for the good of the town ——

HOVSTAD: Yes, but, Doctor ——

DR. STOCKMANN: I know what you're going to say. You don't think it was a bit more than my duty — my simple duty as a citizen. Of course I know that, as well as you do. But you see, my fellow townsmen — good Lord! the poor souls think so much of me ——

ASLAKSEN: Yes, the townspeople have hitherto thought very highly of you, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: That's exactly why I'm afraid that —. What I wanted to say was this: when all this comes to them — especially to the poorer classes — as a summons to take the affairs of the town into their own hands for the future ——

HOVSTAD [*rising*]: H'm, Doctor, I won't conceal from you ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Aha! I thought there was something brewing! But I won't hear of it. If they are getting up anything of that sort ——

HOVSTAD: Of what sort?

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, anything of any sort — a procession with banners, or a banquet, or a subscription for a testimonial, or whatever it may be — you must give me your solemn promise to put a stop to it. And you too, Mr. Aslaksen; do you hear?

HOVSTAD: Excuse me, Doctor; we may as well tell you the whole truth first as last ——

MRS. STOCKMANN *enters from the back, left.*

MRS. STOCKMANN [*seeing the DOCTOR*]: Ah! just as I thought.

HOVSTAD [*going towards her*]: Mrs. Stockmann, too?

DR. STOCKMANN: What the devil do you want here, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN: You know very well what I want.

HOVSTAD: Won't you sit down? Or perhaps ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: Thanks, please don't trouble. And you must forgive my following my husband here; remember, I am the mother of three children.

DR. STOCKMANN: Stuff and nonsense! We all know that well enough.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Well, it doesn't look as if you thought very much about your wife and children today, or you wouldn't be so ready to plunge us all into ruin.

DR. STOCKMANN: Are you quite mad, Katrina! Has a man with a wife and children no right to proclaim the truth? Has he no right to be an active and useful citizen? Has he no right to do his duty by the town he lives in?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Everything in moderation, Thomas!

ASLAKSEN: That's just what I say. Moderation in everything.

MRS. STOCKMANN: You are doing us a great wrong, Mr. Hovstad, in enticing my husband away from house and home, and befooling him in this way.

HOVSTAD: I am not befooling anyone —

DR. STOCKMANN: Befooling! Do you think I should let myself be befooled?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, that's just what you do. I know very well that you are the cleverest man in the town; but you're very easily made a fool of, Thomas. [To HOVSTAD.] Remember that he loses his post at the Baths if you print what he has written —

ASLAKSEN: What!

HOVSTAD: Well now, really, Doctor —

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing*]: Ha, ha! just let them try —! No, no, my dear, they'll think twice about that. I have the compact majority behind me, you see!

MRS. STOCKMANN: That's just the misfortune, that you should have such a horrid thing behind you.

DR. STOCKMANN: Nonsense, Katrina; — you go home and look after your house, and let me take care of society. How can you be in such a fright when you see me so confident and happy? [*Rubbing his hands and walking up and down.*] Truth and the People must win the day; you may be perfectly sure of that. Oh! I can see all our free-souled citizens standing shoulder to shoulder like a conquering army —! [*Stopping by a chair.*] Why, what the devil is that?

ASLAKSEN [*looking at it*]: Oh, Lord!

HOVSTAD [*the same*]: H'm —

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, here's the top-knot of authority!

[*He takes the BURGOMASTER'S official cap carefully between the tips of his fingers and holds it up.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN: The Burgomaster's cap!

DR. STOCKMANN: And here's the staff of office, too! But how in the devil's name did they —?

HOVSTAD: Well then —

DR. STOCKMANN: Ah, I understand! He has been here to talk you over. Ha, ha! He reckoned without his host that time! And when he caught sight of me in the printing-room — [*Bursts out laughing.*] — he took to his heels, eh, Mr. Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN [*hurriedly*]: Exactly; he took to his heels, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: Made off without his stick and —. No, that won't do! Peter never left anything behind him. But where the devil have you stowed him? Ah — in here, of course. Now you shall see, Katrina!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Thomas — I implore you —!

ASLAKSEN: Take care, Doctor!

[DR. STOCKMANN *has put on the BURGOMASTER's cap and grasped his stick; he now goes up to the door, throws it open, and makes a military salute.*]

*The BURGOMASTER enters, red with anger. Behind him comes BILLING.*

BURGOMASTER: What is the meaning of these antics?

DR. STOCKMANN: Respect, my good Peter! Now, it's I that am in power in this town. [*He struts up and down.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*almost in tears*]: Oh, Thomas!

BURGOMASTER [*following him*]: Give me my cap and stick!

DR. STOCKMANN [*as before*]: You may be Chief of Police, but I am Burgomaster. I am master of the whole town I tell you!

BURGOMASTER: Put down my cap, I say. Remember it is an official cap, as by law prescribed!

DR. STOCKMANN: Pshaw! Do you think the awakening lion of the democracy will let itself be scared by a gold-laced cap? There's to be a revolution in the town tomorrow, let me tell you. You threatened me with dismissal; but now I dismiss you — dismiss you from all your offices of trust —. You think I can't do it? — Oh, yes, I can! I have the irresistible forces of society on my side. Hovstad and Billing will thunder in the *People's Messenger*, and Aslaksen will take the field at the head of the House-owners' Association —

ASLAKSEN: No, Doctor, I shall not.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, of course you will —

BURGOMASTER: Aha! Perhaps Mr. Hovstad would like to join the agitation after all?

HOVSTAD: No, Burgomaster.

ASLAKSEN: No, Mr. Hovstad isn't such a fool as to ruin both himself and the paper for the sake of a delusion.

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking about him*]: What does all this mean?

HOVSTAD: You have presented your case in a false light, Doctor; therefore I am unable to give you my support.

BILLING: And after what the Burgomaster has been so kind as to explain to me, I —

DR. STOCKMANN: In a false light! Well, I am responsible for that. Just you print my article, and I promise you I shall prove it up to the hilt.

HOVSTAD: I shall not print it. I cannot, and will not, and dare not print it.

DR. STOCKMANN: You dare not? What nonsense is this? You are editor; and I suppose it's the editor that controls a paper.

ASLAKSEN: No, it's the subscribers, Doctor.

BURGOMASTER: Fortunately.

ASLAKSEN: It's public opinion, the enlightened majority, the house-owners and all the rest. It's they who control a paper.

DR. STOCKMANN [*calmly*]: And all these powers I have against me?

ASLAKSEN: Yes, you have. It would mean absolute ruin for the town if your article were inserted.

DR. STOCKMANN: So that is the way of it!

BURGOMASTER: My hat and stick!

[DR. STOCKMANN *takes off the cap and lays it on the table along with the stick.*]

BURGOMASTER [*taking them both*]: Your term of office has come to an untimely end.

DR. STOCKMANN: The end is not yet. [*To HOVSTAD.*] So you are quite determined not to print my article in the *Messenger*?

HOVSTAD: Quite; for the sake of your family, if for no other reason.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, be kind enough to leave his family out of the question, Mr. Hovstad.

BURGOMASTER [*takes a manuscript from his pocket*]: When this appears, the public will be in possession of all necessary information; it is an authentic statement I place it in your hands.

HOVSTAD [*taking the MS*]: Good. It shall appear in due course.

DR. STOCKMANN: And not mine! You imagine you can kill me and the truth by a conspiracy of silence! But it won't be so easy as you think. Mr. Aslaksen, will you be good enough to print my article at once, as a pamphlet? I'll pay for it myself, and be my own publisher. I'll have four hundred copies — no, five — six hundred.

ASLAKSEN: No. If you offered me its weight in gold, I dare not lend my press to such a purpose, Doctor. I daren't fly in the face of public opinion. You won't get it printed anywhere in the whole town.

DR. STOCKMANN: Then give it me back.

HOVSTAD [*handing him the MS*]: By all means.

DR. STOCKMANN [*taking up his hat and cane*]: It shall be made public all the same. I shall read it at a great mass meeting; all my fellow citizens shall hear the voice of truth!

BURGOMASTER: Not a single society in the town would let you their hall for such a purpose.

ASLAKSEN: Not one, I'm quite certain.

BILLING: No, strike me dead if they would!

MRS. STOCKMANN: That would be too disgraceful! Why do they turn against you like this, every one of them?

DR. STOCKMANN [*irritated*]: I'll tell you why. It's because in this town all the men

are old women — like you. They all think of nothing but their families, not of the general good.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*taking his arm*]: Then I'll show them that an — an old woman can be a man for once in a way. For now I'll stand by you, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: Bravely said, Katrina! I swear by my soul and conscience the truth shall out! If they won't let me a hall, I'll hire a drum and march through the town with it; and I'll read my paper at every street corner.

BURGOMASTER: You can scarcely be such a raving lunatic as that?

DR. STOCKMANN: I am.

ASLAKSEN: You would not get a single man in the whole town to go with you.

BILLING: No, strike me dead if you would!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Don't give in, Thomas. I'll ask the boys to go with you.

DR. STOCKMANN: That's a splendid idea!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Morten will be delighted; and Eilif will go too, I dare say.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, and so will Petra! And you yourself, Katrina!

MRS. STOCKMANN: No, no, not I. But I'll stand at the window and watch you — that I will.

DR. STOCKMANN [*throwing his arms about her and kissing her*]: Thank you for that! Now, my good sirs, we're ready for the fight! Now we shall see whether your despicable tactics can stop the mouth of the patriot who wants to purge society!

*[He and his wife go out together by the door in the back, left.]*

BURGOMASTER [*shaking his head dubiously*]: Now he has turned her head too!

## ACT FOURTH

*A large old-fashioned room in CAPTAIN HORSTER'S house. An open folding-door in the background leads to an anteroom. In the wall on the left are three windows. About the middle of the opposite wall is a platform, and on it a small table, two candles, a water-bottle and glass, and a bell. For the rest, the room is lighted by sconces placed between the windows. In front, on the left, is a table with a candle on it, and by it a chair. In front, to the right, a door, and near it a few chairs.*

*Large assemblage of all classes of townsfolk. In the crowd are a few women and schoolboys. More and more people gradually stream in from the back until the room is quite full.*

FIRST CITIZEN [*to another standing near him*]: So you're here too, Lamstad?

SECOND CITIZEN: I never miss a public meeting.

A BYSTANDER: I suppose you've brought your whistle?

SECOND CITIZEN: Of course I have; haven't you?

THIRD CITIZEN: I should think so. And Skipper Evensen said he'd bring a thumping big horn.

SECOND CITIZEN: He's a good 'un, is Evensen!

[*Laughter in the group.*]

A FOURTH CITIZEN [*joining them*]: I say, what's it all about? What's going on here tonight?

SECOND CITIZEN: Why, it's Dr. Stockmann that's going to lecture against the Burgomaster.

FOURTH CITIZEN: But the Burgomaster's his brother.

FIRST CITIZEN: That makes no difference. Dr. Stockmann's not afraid of him.

THIRD CITIZEN: But he's all wrong; the *People's Messenger* says so.

SECOND CITIZEN: Yes, he must be wrong this time; for neither the House-owners' Association nor the Citizens' Club would let him have a hall.

FIRST CITIZEN: They wouldn't even lend him the hall at the Baths.

SECOND CITIZEN: No, you may be sure they wouldn't.

A MAN [*in another group*]: Now, who's the one to follow in this business, eh?

ANOTHER MAN [*in the same group*]: Just keep your eye on Aslaksen, and do as he does.

BILLING [*with a portfolio under his arm, makes his way through the crowd*]: Excuse me, gentlemen. Will you allow me to pass? I'm here to report for the *People's Messenger*. Many thanks.

[*Sits by the table on the left.*]

A WORKING-MAN: Who's he?

ANOTHER WORKING-MAN: Don't you know him? It's that fellow Billing, that writes for Aslaksen's paper.

CAPTAIN HORSTER *enters by the door in front on the right, escorting MRS. STOCKMANN and PETRA. EILIF and MORTEN follow them.*

HORSTER: This is where I thought you might sit; you can so easily slip out if anything should happen.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Do you think there will be any disturbance?

HORSTER: One can never tell — with such a crowd. But there's no occasion for anxiety.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*sitting down*]: How kind it was of you to offer Stockmann this room.

HORSTER: Since no one else would, I —

PETRA [*who has also seated herself*]: And it was brave too, Captain Horster.

HORSTER: Oh, I don't see where the bravery comes in.

HÖVSTAD and ASLAKSEN *enter at the same moment, but make their way through the crowd separately.*

ASLAKSEN [*going up to HORSTER*]: Hasn't the Doctor come yet?

HORSTER: He's waiting in there.

[*A movement at the door in the background.*]



HOVSTAD [*to BILLING*]: There's the Burgomaster! Look!

BILLING: Yes, strike me dead if he hasn't put in an appearance after all!

BURGOMASTER STOCKMANN *makes his way blandly through the meeting, bowing politely to both sides, and takes his stand by the wall on the left. Soon afterwards, DR. STOCKMANN enters by the door on the right. He wears a black frock coat and white necktie. Faint applause, met by a subdued hissing. Then silence.*

DR. STOCKMANN [*in a low tone*]: How do you feel, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Quite comfortable, thank you. [*In a low voice.*] Now do keep your temper, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, I shall keep myself well in hand. [*Looks at his watch, ascends the platform, and bows.*] It's a quarter past the hour, so I shall begin — [*Takes out his MS.*]

ASLAKSEN: But surely a chairman must be elected first.

DR. STOCKMANN: No, that's not at all necessary.

SEVERAL GENTLEMEN [*shouting*]: Yes, yes.

BURGOMASTER: I should certainly say that a chairman ought to be elected.

DR. STOCKMANN: But I've called this meeting to give a lecture, Peter!

BURGOMASTER: Dr. Stockmann's lecture may possibly lead to differences of opinion.

SEVERAL VOICES IN THE CROWD: A chairman! A chairman!

HOVSTAD: The general voice of the meeting seems to be for a chairman!

DR. STOCKMANN [*controlling himself*]: Very well then; let the meeting have its way.

ASLAKSEN: Will not the Burgomaster take the chair?

THREE GENTLEMEN [*clapping*]: Bravo! Bravo!

BURGOMASTER: For reasons you will easily understand, I must decline. But, fortunately, we have among us one whom I think we can all accept. I allude to the president of the House-owners' Association, Mr. Aslaksen.

MANY VOICES: Yes, yes! Bravo Aslaksen! Hurrah for Aslaksen!

[*DR. STOCKMANN takes his MS. and descends from the platform.*]

ASLAKSEN: Since my fellow citizens repose this trust in me, I cannot refuse — [*Applause and cheers. ASLAKSEN ascends the platform.*]

BILLING [*writing*]: So — "Mr. Aslaksen was elected by acclamation —"

ASLAKSEN: And now, as I have been called to the chair, I take the liberty of saying a few brief words. I am a quiet, peace-loving man; I am in favour of discreet moderation, and of — and of moderate discretion. Everyone who knows me, knows that.

MANY VOICES: Yes, yes, Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN: I have learnt in the school of life and of experience that moderation is the virtue in which the individual citizen finds his best advantage —

BURGOMASTER: Hear, hear!

ASLAKSEN: — and it is discretion and moderation, too, that best serve the

community. I could therefore suggest to our respected fellow citizen, who has called this meeting, that he should endeavour to keep within the bounds of moderation.

A MAN [*by the door*]: Three cheers for the Temperance Society!

A VOICE: Go to the devil!

VOICES: Hush! hush!

ASLAKSEN: No interruptions, gentlemen! — Does anyone wish to offer any observations?

BURGOMASTER: Mr. Chairman!

ASLAKSEN: Burgomaster Stockmann will address the meeting.

BURGOMASTER: On account of my close relationship — of which you are probably aware — to the present medical officer of the Baths, I should have preferred not to speak here this evening. But my position as chairman of the Baths, and my care for the vital interests of this town, force me to move a resolution. I may doubtless assume that not a single citizen here present thinks it desirable that untrustworthy and exaggerated statements should get abroad as to the sanitary condition of the Baths and of our town.

MANY VOICES: No, no, no! Certainly not! We protest.

BURGOMASTER: I therefore beg to move, "That this meeting declines to hear the proposed lecture or speech on the subject by the medical officer of the Baths."

DR. STOCKMANN [*flaring up*]: Declines to hear ——! What do you mean?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coughing*]: H'm! h'm!

DR. STOCKMANN [*controlling himself*]: So I am not to be heard?

BURGOMASTER: In my statement in the *People's Messenger* I have made the public acquainted with the essential facts, so that all well-disposed citizens can easily form their own judgment. From that statement it will be seen that the medical officer's proposal — besides amounting to a vote of censure upon the leading men of the town — at bottom only means saddling the ratepayers with an unnecessary outlay of at least a hundred thousand crowns.

[*Sounds of protest and some hissing.*]

ASLAKSEN [*ringing the bell*]: Order, gentlemen! I must beg leave to support the Burgomaster's resolution. I quite agree with him that there is something beneath the surface of the Doctor's agitation. In all his talk about the Baths, it is really a revolution he is aiming at; he wants to effect a redistribution of power. No one doubts the excellence of Dr. Stockmann's intentions — of course there cannot be two opinions as to that. I, too, am in favour of self-government by the people, if only it doesn't cost the ratepayers too much. But in this case it would do so; and therefore I'll be hanged if — excuse me — in short, I cannot go with Dr. Stockmann upon this occasion. You can buy even gold too dear; that's my opinion. [*Loud applause on all sides.*]

HOVSTAD: I, too, feel bound to explain my attitude. Dr. Stockmann's agitation seemed at first to find favour in several quarters, and I supported it as im-

partially as I could. But it presently appeared that we had been misled by a false representation of the facts ——

DR. STOCKMANN: False ——!

HOVSTAD: Well, then, an untrustworthy representation. This the Burgomaster's report has proved. I trust no one here present doubts my liberal principles; the attitude of the *Messenger* on all great political questions is well known to you all. But I have learned from men of judgment and experience that in purely local matters a paper must observe a certain amount of caution.

ASLAKSEN: I entirely agree with the speaker.

HOVSTAD: And in the matter under discussion it is quite evident that Dr. Stockmann has public opinion against him. But, gentlemen, what is an editor's clearest and most imperative duty? Is it not to work in harmony with his readers? Has he not in some sort received a tacit mandate to further assiduously and unweariedly the interests of his constituents? Or am I mistaken in this?

MANY VOICES: No, no, no! Hovstad is right!

HOVSTAD: It has cost me a bitter struggle to break with a man in whose house I have of late been a frequent guest — with a man who, up to this day, has enjoyed the unqualified goodwill of his fellow citizens — with a man whose only, or, at any rate, whose chief fault is that he consults his heart rather than his head.

A FEW SCATTERED VOICES: That's true! Hurrah for Dr. Stockmann!

HOVSTAD: But my duty towards the community has constrained me to break with him. Then, too, there is another consideration that impels me to oppose him, and, if possible, to block the ill-omened path upon which he is entering: consideration for his family ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Keep to the water-works and sewers!

HOVSTAD: —— consideration for his wife and his unprotected children.

MORTEN: Is that us, mother?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Hush!

ASLAKSEN: I will now put the Burgomaster's resolution to the vote.

DR. STOCKMANN: You need not. I have no intention of saying anything this evening of all the filth at the Baths. No! You shall hear something quite different.

BURGOMASTER [*half aloud*]: What next, I wonder?

A DRUNKEN MAN [*at the main entrance*]: I'm a ratepayer, so I've a right to my opinion! And it's my full, firm, incomprehensible opinion that ——

SEVERAL VOICES: Silence up there!

OTHERS: He's drunk! Turn him out!

[*The drunken man is turned out.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Can I speak?

ASLAKSEN [*ringing the bell*]: Dr. Stockmann will address the meeting.

DR. STOCKMANN: A few days ago, I should have liked to see anyone venture upon such an attempt to gag me as has been made here tonight! I would have fought like a lion for my sacred rights! But now I care little enough; for now I have more important things to speak of.

[*The people crowd closer round him. MORTEN KILL comes in sight among the bystanders.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*continuing*]: I have been pondering a great many things during these last days — thinking such a multitude of thoughts, that at last my head was positively in a whirl —

BURGOMASTER [*coughing*]: H'm —!

DR. STOCKMANN: But presently things seemed to straighten themselves out, and I saw them clearly in all their bearings. That is why I stand here this evening. I am about to make great revelations, my fellow citizens! I am going to announce to you a far-reaching discovery, beside which the trifling fact that our water-works are poisoned, and that our health-resort is built on pestilential ground, sinks into insignificance.

MANY VOICES [*shouting*]: Don't speak about the Baths! We won't listen to that! No more of that!

DR. STOCKMANN: I have said I would speak of the great discovery I have made within the last few days — the discovery that all our sources of spiritual life are poisoned, and that our whole society rests upon a pestilential basis of falsehood.

SEVERAL VOICES [*in astonishment and half aloud*]: What's he saying?

BURGOMASTER: Such an insinuation —!

ASLAKSEN [*with his hand on the bell*]: I must call upon the speaker to moderate his expressions.

DR. STOCKMANN: I have loved my native town as dearly as any man can love the home of his childhood. I was young when I left our town, and distance, homesickness and memory threw, as it were, a glamour over the place and its people.

[*Some applause and cries of approval.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Then for years I was imprisoned in a horrible hole, far away in the north. As I went about among the people scattered here and there over the stony wilderness, it seemed to me, many a time, that it would have been better for these poor famishing creatures to have had a cattle-doctor to attend them, instead of a man like me.

[*Murmurs in the room.*]

BILLING [*laying down his pen*]: Strike me dead if I've ever heard —!

HOVSTAD: What an insult to an estimable peasantry!

DR. STOCKMANN: Wait a moment! — I don't think anyone can reproach me with forgetting my native town up there. I sat brooding like an eider duck, and what I hatched was — the plan of the Baths.

[*Applause and expressions of dissent.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: And when, at last, fate ordered things so happily that I could come home again — then, fellow citizens, it seemed to me that I hadn't another desire in the world. Yes, one desire I had: an eager, constant, burning desire to be of service to my birthplace, and to its people.

BURGOMASTER [*gazing into vacancy*]: A strange method to select ——!

DR. STOCKMANN: So I went about revelling in my happy illusions. But yesterday morning — no, it was really two nights ago — my mind's eyes were opened wide, and the first thing I saw was the colossal stupidity of the authorities ——

[*Noise, cries, and laughter. MRS. STOCKMANN coughs repeatedly.*]

BURGOMASTER: Mr. Chairman!

ASLAKSEN [*ringing his bell*]: In virtue of my position ——!

DR. STOCKMANN: It's petty to catch me up on a word, Mr. Aslaksen! I only mean that I became alive to the extraordinary muddle our leading men had been guilty of, down at the Baths. I cannot for the life of me abide leading men — I've seen enough of them in my time. They are like goats in a young plantation: they do harm at every point; they block the path of a free man wherever he turns — and I should be glad if we could exterminate them like other noxious animals ——

[*Uproar in the room.*]

BURGOMASTER: Mr. Chairman, are such expressions permissible?

ASLAKSEN [*with his hand on the bell*]: Dr. Stockmann ——

DR. STOCKMANN: I can't conceive how it is that I have only now seen through these gentry; for haven't I had a magnificent example before my eyes here every day — my brother Peter — slow of understanding, tenacious in prejudice ——

[*Laughter, noise, and whistling. MRS. STOCKMANN coughs. ASLAKSEN rings violently.*]

THE DRUNKEN MAN [*who has come in again*]: Is it me you're alluding to? Sure enough, my name's Petersen; but devil take me if ——

ANGRY VOICES: Out with that drunken man! Turn him out!

[*The man is again turned out.*]

BURGOMASTER: Who is that person?

A BYSTANDER: I don't know him, Burgomaster.

ANOTHER: He doesn't belong to the town.

A THIRD: I believe he's a timber-dealer from ——

[*The rest is inaudible.*]

ASLAKSEN: The man was evidently intoxicated. — Continue, Dr. Stockmann; but pray endeavour to be moderate.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, fellow citizens, I shall say no more about our leading men. If anyone imagines, from what I have just said, that it's these gentlemen I want to make short work of tonight, he is mistaken — altogether mistaken. For I cherish the comfortable conviction that these laggards, these relics of a decaying order of thought, are diligently cutting their own throats. They

need no doctor to hasten their end. And it is not people of that sort that constitute the real danger to society; it is not they who are most active in poisoning the sources of our spiritual life and making a plague-spot of the ground beneath our feet; it is not they who are the most dangerous enemies of truth and freedom in our society.

CRIES FROM ALL SIDES: Who, then? Who is it? Name, name!

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, you may be sure I shall name them! For this is the great discovery I made yesterday: [*In a louder tone.*] The most dangerous foe to truth and freedom in our midst is the compact majority. Yes, it's the confounded, compact, liberal majority — that, and nothing else! There, I've told you.

[*Immense disturbance in the room. Most of the audience are shouting, stamping, and whistling. Several elderly gentlemen exchange furtive glances and seem to be enjoying the scene. MRS. STOCKMANN rises in alarm. EILIF and MORTEN advance threateningly towards the schoolboys, who are making noises. ASLAKSEN rings the bell and calls for order. HOVSTAD and BILLING both speak, but nothing can be heard. At last quiet is restored.*]

ASLAKSEN: I must request the speaker to withdraw his ill-considered expressions.

DR. STOCKMANN: Never, Mr. Aslaksen! For it's this very majority that robs me of my freedom, and wants to forbid me to speak the truth.

HOVSTAD: The majority always has right on its side.

BILLING: Yes, and truth too, strike me dead!

DR. STOCKMANN: The majority never has right on its side. Never, I say! That is one of the social lies that a free, thinking man is bound to rebel against. Who make up the majority in any given country? Is it the wise men or the fools? I think we must agree that the fools are in a terrible, overwhelming majority, all the wide world over. But how in the devil's name can it ever be right for the fools to rule over the wise men? [*Uproar and yells.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, yes, you can shout me down, but you cannot gainsay me. The majority has might — unhappily — but right it has not. It is I, and the few, the individuals, that are in the right. The minority is always right.

[*Renewed uproar.*]

HOVSTAD: Ha, ha! Dr. Stockmann has turned aristocrat since the day before yesterday!

DR. STOCKMANN: I have said that I have no words to waste on the little, narrow-chested, short-winded crew that lie in our wake. Pulsating life has nothing more to do with them. I am speaking of the few, the individuals among us, who have made all the new, germinating truths their own. These men stand, as it were, at the outposts, so far in the van that the compact majority has not yet reached them — and there they fight for truths that are too lately born into the world's consciousness to have won over the majority.

HOVSTAD: So the Doctor's a revolutionist now!

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, by Heaven, I am, Mr. Hovstad! I am going to revolt

against the lie that truth belongs exclusively to the majority. What sort of truths do the majority rally round? Truths so stricken in years that they are sinking into decrepitude. When a truth is so old as that, gentlemen, it's in a fair way to become a lie. *[Laughter and jeers.]*

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, yes, you may believe me or not, as you please; but truths are by no means the wiry Methuselahs some people think them. A normally-constituted truth lives — let us say — as a rule, seventeen or eighteen years; at the outside twenty; very seldom more. And truths so patriarchal as that are always shockingly emaciated; yet it's not till then that the majority takes them up and recommends them to society as wholesome food. I can assure you there's not much nutriment in that sort of fare; you may take my word as a doctor for that. All these majority-truths are like last year's salt pork; they're like rancid, mouldy ham, producing all the moral scurvy that devastates society.

ASLAKSEN: It seems to me that the honourable speaker is wandering rather far from the subject.

BURGOMASTER: I beg to endorse the Chairman's remark.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, you're surely mad, Peter! I'm keeping as closely to my text as I possibly can; for my text is precisely this — that the masses, the majority, this devil's own compact majority — it's that, I say, that's poisoning the sources of our spiritual life, and making a plague-spot of the ground beneath our feet.

HOVSTAD: And you make this charge against the great, independent majority, just because they have the sense to accept only certain and acknowledged truths?

DR. STOCKMANN: Ah, my dear Mr. Hovstad, don't talk about certain truths! The truths acknowledged by the masses, the multitude, were certain truths to the vanguard in our grandfathers' days. We, the vanguard of today, don't acknowledge them any longer; and I don't believe there exists any other certain truth but this — that no society can live a healthy life upon truths so old and marrowless.

HOVSTAD: But instead of all this vague talk, suppose you were to give us some specimens of these old marrowless truths that we are living upon.

*[Approval from several quarters.]*

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, I could give you no end of samples from the rubbish-heap; but, for the present, I shall keep to one acknowledged truth, which is a hideous lie at bottom, but which Mr. Hovstad, and the *Messenger*, and all adherents of the *Messenger*, live on all the same.

HOVSTAD: And that is —?

DR. STOCKMANN: That is the doctrine you have inherited from your forefathers, and go on thoughtlessly proclaiming far and wide — the doctrine that the multitude, the vulgar herd, the masses, are the pith of the people — that they are the people — that the common man, the ignorant, undeveloped member

of society, has the same right to sanction and to condemn, to counsel and to govern, as the intellectually distinguished few.

BILLING: Well, now, strike me dead ——!

HOVSTAD [*shouting at the same time*]: Citizens, please note this!

ANGRY VOICES: Ho-ho! Aren't we the people? Is it only the grand folks that are to govern?

A WORKING MAN: Out with the fellow that talks like that!

OTHERS: Turn him out!

A CITIZEN [*shouting*]: Blow your horn, Evensen.

[*The deep notes of a horn are heard; whistling, and terrific noise in the room.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*when the noise has somewhat subsided*]: Now do be reasonable!

Can't you bear even for once in a way to hear the voice of truth? I don't ask you all to agree with me on the instant. But I certainly should have expected Mr. Hovstad to back me up, as soon as he had collected himself a bit. Mr. Hovstad sets up to be a freethinker ——

SEVERAL VOICES [*subdued and wondering*]: Freethinker, did he say? What? Mr. Hovstad a freethinker?

HOVSTAD [*shouting*]: Prove it, Dr. Stockmann. When have I said so in print?

DR. STOCKMANN [*reflecting*]: No, upon my soul, you're right there; you've never had the frankness to do that. Well, well, I won't put you on the rack, Mr. Hovstad. Let me be the freethinker then. And now I'll make it clear to you all, and on scientific grounds too, that the *Messenger* is leading you shamefully by the nose, when it tells you that you, the masses, the crowd, are the true pith of the people. I tell you that's only a newspaper lie. The masses are nothing but the raw material that must be fashioned into a People.

[*Murmurs, laughter, and disturbance in the room.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Is it not so with all other living creatures? What a difference between a cultivated and an uncultivated breed of animals! Just look at a common barn-door hen. What meat do you get from such a skinny carcase? Not much, I can tell you! And what sort of eggs does she lay? A decent crow or raven can lay nearly as good. Then take a cultivated Spanish or Japanese hen, or take a fine pheasant or turkey — ah! then you'll see the difference! And now look at the dog, our near relation. Think first of an ordinary vulgar cur — I mean one of those wretched, ragged, plebeian mongrels that haunt the gutters, and soil the sidewalks. Then place such a mongrel by the side of a poodle-dog, descended through many generations from an aristocratic stock, who have lived on delicate food, and heard harmonious voices and music. Do you think the brain of the poodle isn't very differently developed from that of the mongrel? Yes, you may be sure it is! It's well-bred poodle-pups like this that jugglers train to perform the most marvellous tricks. A common peasant-cur could never learn anything of the sort — not if he tried till doomsday.

[*Noise and laughter are heard all round.*]



A CITIZEN [*shouting*]: Do you want to make dogs of us now?

ANOTHER MAN: We're not animals, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, on my soul, but we are animals, my good sir! We're one and all of us animals, whether we like it or not. But truly there are few enough aristocratic animals among us. Oh, there's a terrible difference between poodle-men and mongrel-men! And the ridiculous part of it is, that Mr. Hovstad quite agrees with me so long as it's four-legged animals we're talking of —

HOVSTAD: Oh, beasts are only beasts.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well and good — but no sooner do I apply the law to two-legged animals, than Mr. Hovstad stops short; then he daren't hold his own opinions, or think out his own thoughts; then he turns the whole principle upside down, and proclaims in the *People's Messenger* that the barn-door hen and the gutter-mongrel are precisely the finest specimens in the menagerie. But that's always the way, so long as the commonness still lingers in your system, and you haven't worked your way up to spiritual distinction.

HOVSTAD: I make no pretence to any sort of distinction. I come of simple peasant folk, and I am proud that my root should lie deep down among the common people, who are here being insulted.

WORKMEN: Hurrah for Hovstad. Hurrah! hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN: The sort of common people I am speaking of are not found among the lower classes alone; they crawl and swarm all around us — up to the very summits of society. Just look at your own smug, respectable Burgomaster! Why, my brother Peter belongs as clearly to the common people as any man that walks on two legs — [*Laughter and hisses.*]

BURGOMASTER: I protest against such personalities.

DR. STOCKMANN [*imperturbably*]: — and that not because, like myself, he's descended from a good-for-nothing old pirate from Pomerania, or thereabouts — for that's our ancestry —

BURGOMASTER: An absurd tradition! Utterly groundless.

DR. STOCKMANN: — but he is so because he thinks the thoughts and holds the opinions of his official superiors. Men who do that, belong, intellectually-speaking, to the common people; and that is why my distinguished brother Peter is at bottom so undistinguished, — and consequently so illiberal.

BURGOMASTER: Mr. Chairman —!

HOVSTAD: So that the distinguished people in this country are the Liberals? That's quite a new light on the subject.

[*Laughter.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, that is part of my new discovery. And this, too, follows: that liberality of thought is almost precisely the same thing as morality. Therefore I say it's absolutely unpardonable of the *Messenger* to proclaim, day out, day in, the false doctrine that it's the masses, the multitude, the compact majority, that monopolise liberality and morality, — and that vice and corrup-

tion and all sorts of spiritual uncleanness ooze out of culture, as all that filth oozes down to the Baths from the Mill Dale tan-works!

[*Noise and interruptions.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*goes on imperturbably, smiling in his eagerness*]: And yet this same *Messenger* can preach about elevating the masses and the multitude to a higher level of well-being! Why, deuce take it, if the *Messenger's* own doctrine holds good, the elevation of the masses would simply mean hurling them straight to perdition! But, happily, the notion that culture demoralises is nothing but an old traditional lie. Nö, it's stupidity, poverty, the ugliness of life, that do the devil's work! In a house that isn't aired and swept every day — my wife maintains that the floors ought to be scrubbed too, but perhaps that is going too far; — well, — in such a house, I say, within two or three years, people lose the power of thinking or acting morally. Lack of oxygen enervates the conscience. And there seems to be precious little oxygen in many and many a house in this town, since the whole compact majority is unscrupulous enough to want to found its future upon a quagmire of lies and fraud.

ASLAKSEN: I cannot allow so gross an insult to be levelled against a whole community.

A GENTLEMAN: I move that the Chairman order the speaker to sit down.

EAGER VOICES: Yes, yes! That's right! Sit down! Sit down!

DR. STOCKMANN [*flaring up*]: Then I shall proclaim the truth at every street corner! I shall write to newspapers in other towns! The whole country shall know how matters stand here!

HOVSTAD: It almost seems as if the Doctor's object were to ruin the town.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, so well do I love my native town that I would rather ruin it than see it flourishing upon a lie.

ASLAKSEN: That's plain speaking.

[*Noise and whistling.* MRS. STOCKMANN *coughs in vain; the Doctor no longer heeds her.*]

HOVSTAD [*shouting amid the tumult*]: The man who would ruin a community must be an enemy to his fellow citizens!

DR. STOCKMANN [*with growing excitement*]: What does it matter if a lying community is ruined! Let it be levelled to the ground, say I! All men who live upon a lie ought to be exterminated like vermin! You'll end by poisoning the whole country; you'll bring it to such a pass that the whole country will deserve to perish. And if ever it comes to that, I shall say, from the bottom of my heart: Perish the country! Perish all its people!

A MAN [*in the crowd*]: Why, he talks like a regular enemy of the people!

BILLING: Strike me dead but there spoke the people's voice!

THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY [*shouting*]: Yes! yes! yes! He's an enemy of the people! He hates his country! He hates the whole people!

ASLAKSEN: Both as a citizen of this town and as a human being, I am deeply shocked at what it has been my lot to hear tonight. Dr. Stockmann has unmasked himself in a manner I should never have dreamt of. I must reluctantly subscribe to the opinion just expressed by some estimable citizens; and I think we ought to formulate this opinion in a resolution. I therefore beg to move, "That this meeting declares the medical officer of the Baths, Dr. Thomas Stockmann, to be an enemy of the people."

*[Thunders of applause and cheers. Many form a circle round the DOCTOR and hoot at him. MRS. STOCKMANN and PETRA have risen. MORTEN and EILIF fight the other school-boys, who have also been hooting. Some grown-up persons separate them.]*

DR. STOCKMANN *[to the people hooting]*: Ah, fools that you are! I tell you that —

ASLAKSEN *[ringing]*: The Doctor is out of order in speaking. A formal vote must be taken; but out of consideration for personal feelings, it will be taken in writing and without names. Have you any blank paper, Mr. Billing?

BILLING: Here's both blue and white paper —

ASLAKSEN: Capital; that will save time. Put it up into slips. That's it. *[To the meeting]*: Blue means no, white means aye. I myself will go round and collect the votes.

*[The BURGOMASTER leaves the room. ASLAKSEN and a few others go round with pieces of paper in hats.]*

A GENTLEMAN *[to HOVSTAD]*: What can be the matter with the Doctor? What does it all mean?

HOVSTAD: Why, you know what a hare-brained creature he is.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN *[to BILLING]*: I say, you're often at his house. Have you ever noticed if the fellow drinks?

BILLING: Strike me dead if I know what to say. The toddy's always on the table when anyone looks in.

A THIRD GENTLEMAN: No, I should rather say he went off his head at times.

FIRST GENTLEMAN: I wonder if there's madness in the family?

BILLING: I shouldn't be surprised.

A FOURTH GENTLEMAN: No, it's pure malice. He wants to be revenged for something or other.

BILLING: He was certainly talking about a rise in his salary the other day; but he didn't get it.

ALL THE GENTLEMAN *[together]*: Aha! That explains everything.

THE DRUNKEN MAN *[in the crowd]*: I want a blue one, I do! And I'll have a white one too.

SEVERAL PEOPLE: There's the tipsy man again! Turn him out.

MORTEN KIIL *[approaching the DOCTOR]*: Well, Stockmann, you see now what such monkey-tricks lead to?

DR. STOCKMANN: I have done my duty.

MORTEN KIIL: What was that you said about the Mill Dale tanneries?

DR. STOCKMANN: You heard what I said — that all the filth comes from them.

MORTEN KIIL: From my tannery as well?

DR. STOCKMANN: I'm sorry to say yours is the worst of all.

MORTEN KIIL: Are you going to put that in the papers, too?

DR. STOCKMANN: I can't gloze anything over.

MORTEN KIIL: This may cost you dear, Stockmann! [*He goes out.*]

A FAT GENTLEMAN [*goes up to HORSTER, without bowing to the ladies*]: Well, Captain, so you lend your house to enemies of the people.

HORSTER: I suppose I can do as I please with my own property, Sir.

THE GENTLEMAN: Then of course you can have no objection if I follow your example?

HORSTER: What do you mean, Sir?

THE GENTLEMAN: You shall hear from me tomorrow.

[*Turns away and goes out.*]

PETRA: Wasn't that the owner of your ship, Captain Horster?

HORSTER: Yes, that was Mr. Vik.

ASLAKSEN [*with the voting papers in his hands, ascends the platform and rings*]:

Gentlemen! I have now to announce the result of the vote. All the voters, with one exception —

A YOUNG GENTLEMAN: That's the tipsy man!

ASLAKSEN: With the exception of one intoxicated person, this meeting of citizens unanimously declares the medical officer of the Baths, Dr. Thomas Stockmann, to be an enemy of the people. [*Cheers and applause.*] Three cheers for our fine old municipality! [*Cheers.*] Three cheers for our able and energetic Burgomaster, who has so loyally set family prejudice aside! [*Cheers.*] The meeting is dissolved. [*He descends.*]

BILLING: Three cheers for the Chairman!

ALL: Hurrah for Aslaksen.

DR. STOCKMANN: My hat and coat, Petra. Captain, have you room for passengers to the new world?

HORSTER: For you and yours, Doctor, we'll make room.

DR. STOCKMANN [*while PETRA helps him to put on his coat*]: Good! Come, Katrina, come, boys! [*He gives his wife his arm.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*in a low voice*]: Thomas, dear, let us go out by the back way.

DR. STOCKMANN: No back ways, Katrina! [*In a loud voice.*] You shall hear from the enemy of the people, before he shakes the dust from his feet! I am not so forbearing as a certain person; I don't say: I forgive you, for you know not what you do.

ASLAKSEN [*shouts*]: That is a blasphemous comparison, Dr. Stockmann!

BILLING: Strike me ——! This is more than a serious man can stand!

A COARSE VOICE: And he threatens us into the bargain!

ANGRY CRIES: Let's smash his windows! Duck him in the fiord!

A MAN [*in the crowd*]: Blow your horn, Evensen! Blow, man, blow!

[*Horn-blowing, whistling, and wild shouting. The DOCTOR, with his family, goes towards the door. HORSTER clears the way for them.*]

ALL [*yelling after them as they go out*]: Enemy of the people! Enemy of the people!  
Enemy of the people!

BILLING: Strike me dead if I'd care to drink toddy at Stockmann's tonight!

[*The people throng towards the door; the shouting is taken up by others outside; from the street are heard cries of "Enemy of the people! Enemy of the people!"*]

## ACT FIFTH

DR. STOCKMANN's study. Bookshelves and glass cases with various collections along the walls. In the back, a door leading to the hall; in front, on the left, a door to the sitting-room. In the wall to the right are two windows, all the panes of which are smashed. In the middle of the room is the DOCTOR's writing-table, covered with books and papers. The room is in disorder. It is forenoon.

DR. STOCKMANN, in dressing-gown, slippers, and skull-cap, is bending down and raking with an umbrella under one of the cabinets; at last he rakes out a stone.

DR. STOCKMANN [*speaking through the sitting-room doorway*]: Katrina, I've found another!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*in the sitting-room*]: Oh, I'm sure you'll find plenty more.

DR. STOCKMANN [*placing the stone on a pile of others on the table*]: I shall keep these stones as sacred relics. Eilif and Morten shall see them every day, and when I die they shall be heirlooms. [*Raking under the bookcase.*] Hasn't — what the devil is her name? — the girl — hasn't she been for the glazier yet?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming in*]: Yes, but he said he didn't know whether he would be able to come today.

DR. STOCKMANN: I believe, if the truth were told, he daren't come.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Well, Randina, too, had an idea he was afraid to come, because of the neighbours. [*Speaks through the sitting-room doorway.*] What is it, Randina? — Very well. [*Goes out, and returns immediately.*] Here is a letter for you, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: Let me see. [*Opens the letter and reads.*] Aha!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Who is it from?

DR. STOCKMANN: From the landlord. He gives us notice.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Is it possible? He is such a nice man —

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking at the letter*]: He daren't do otherwise, he says. He is very unwilling to do it; but he daren't do otherwise — on account of his fellow

citizens — out of respect for public opinion — is in a dependent position — doesn't dare to offend certain influential men ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: There, you see, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, yes, I see well enough; they are all cowards, every one of them, in this town; no one dares do anything for fear of all the rest. [*Throws the letter on the table.*] But it's all the same to us, Katrina. We will shape our course for the new world, and then ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: But are you sure this idea of going abroad is altogether wise, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN: Would you have me stay here, where they have pilloried me as an enemy of the people, branded me, smashed my windows! And look here, Katrina, they've torn a hole in my black trousers, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, dear; and these are the best you have!

DR. STOCKMANN: A man should never put on his best trousers when he goes out to battle for freedom and truth. Well, I don't care so much about the trousers; them you can always patch up for me. But that the mob, the rabble, should dare to attack me, as if they were my equals — that is what I can't, for the life of me, stomach!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, they have behaved abominably to you here, Thomas; but is that any reason for leaving the country altogether?

DR. STOCKMANN: Do you think the plebeians aren't just as insolent in other towns? Oh, yes, they are, my dear; it's six of one and half a dozen of the other. Well, never mind; let the curs yelp; that's not the worst; the worst is that everyone, all over the country, is the slave of his party. Not that I suppose — very likely it's no better in the free West either; the compact majority, and enlightened public opinion, and all the other devil's trash is rampant there too. But you see the conditions are larger there than here; they may kill you, but they don't slow-torture you; they don't screw up a free soul in a vice, as they do at home here. And then, if need be, you can keep out of it all. [*Walks up and down.*] If I only knew of any primeval forest, or a little South Sea island to be sold cheap ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, but the boys, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN [*comes to a standstill*]: What an extraordinary woman you are, Katrina! Would you rather have the boys grow up in such a society as ours? Why, you could see for yourself yesterday evening that one half of the population is stark mad, and if the other half hasn't lost its wits, that's only because they are brute beasts who haven't any wits to lose.

MRS. STOCKMANN: But really, my dear Thomas, you do say such imprudent things.

DR. STOCKMANN: What! Isn't it the truth that I tell them? Don't they turn all ideas upside down? Don't they stir up right and wrong into one hotch-potch? Don't they call lies everything that I know to be the truth? But the maddest

thing of all is to see crowds of grown men, calling themselves Liberals, go about persuading themselves and others that they are friends of freedom! Did you ever hear anything like it, Katrina?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, yes, no doubt. But ——

*PETRA enters from the sitting-room.*

MRS. STOCKMANN: Back from school already?

PETRA: Yes; I have been dismissed.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Dismissed?

DR. STOCKMANN: You too!

PETRA: Mrs. Busk gave me notice, and so I thought it best to leave there and then.

DR. STOCKMANN: You did perfectly right!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Who could have thought Mrs. Busk was such a bad woman!

PETRA: Oh, mother, Mrs. Busk isn't bad at all; I saw clearly how sorry she was.

But she dared not do otherwise, she said; and so I am dismissed.

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing and rubbing his hands*]: She dared not do otherwise — just like the rest! Oh, it's delicious.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, well, after that frightful scene last night ——

PETRA: It wasn't only that. What do you think, father ——?

DR. STOCKMANN: Well?

PETRA: Mrs. Busk showed me no fewer than three letters she had received this morning ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Anonymous, of course?

PETRA: Yes.

DR. STOCKMANN: They never dare give their names, Katrina!

PETRA: And two of them stated that a gentleman who is often at our house said at the club last night that I held extremely advanced opinions upon various things ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course you didn't deny it.

PETRA: Of course not. You know Mrs. Busk herself is pretty advanced in her opinions when we're alone together; but now that this has come out about me, she dared not keep me on.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Someone that is often at our house, too. There, you see, Thomas, what comes of all your hospitality.

DR. STOCKMANN: We won't live any longer in such a pig-sty! Pack up as quickly as you can, Katrina; let's get away — the sooner the better.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Hush! I think there is someone in the passage. See who it is, Petra.

PETRA [*opening the door*]: Oh, is it you, Captain Horster? Please come in.

HORSTER [*from the hall*]: Good morning. I thought I might just look in and ask how you are.

DR. STOCKMANN [*shaking his hand*]: Thanks; that's very good of you.

MRS. STOCKMANN: And thank you for helping us through the crowd last night, Captain Horster.

PETRA: How did you ever get home again?

HORSTER: Oh, that was all right. I am tolerably able-bodied, you know; and those fellows' bark is worse than their bite.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, isn't it extraordinary, this piggish cowardice? Come here, and let me show you something! Look, here are all the stones they threw in at us. Only look at them! Upon my soul there aren't more than two decent-sized lumps in the whole heap; the rest are nothing but pebbles — mere gravel. They stood down there, and yelled, and swore they'd half kill me —; but as for really doing it — no, there's mighty little fear of that in this town!

HORSTER: You may thank your stars for that this time, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: So I do, of course. But it's depressing all the same; for if ever it should come to a serious national struggle, you may be sure public opinion would be for taking to its heels, and the compact majority would scamper for their lives like a flock of sheep, Captain Horster. That is what's so melancholy to think of; it grieves me to the heart. — But deuce take it — it's foolish of me to feel anything of the sort! They have called me an enemy of the people; well then, let me be an enemy of the people!

MRS. STOCKMANN: That you'll never be, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: You'd better not take your oath of it, Katrina. A bad name may act like a pin-scratch in the lung. And that confounded word — I can't get rid of it; it has sunk deep into my heart; and there it lies gnawing and sucking like an acid. And no magnesia can cure me.

PETRA: Pooh; you should only laugh at them, father.

HORSTER: People will think differently yet, Doctor.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, Thomas, that's as certain as that you are standing here.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, perhaps, when it is too late. Well, as they make their bed so they must lie! Let them go on wallowing here in their pig-sty, and learn to repent having driven a patriot into exile. When do you sail, Captain Horster?

HORSTER: Well — that's really what I came to speak to you about —

DR. STOCKMANN: What? Anything wrong with the ship?

HORSTER: No; but the fact is, I shan't be sailing in her.

PETRA: Surely you have not been dismissed?

HORSTER [*smiling*]: Yes, I have.

PETRA: You too!

MRS. STOCKMANN: There, you see, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: And for the truth's sake! Oh, if I could possibly have imagined such a thing —



HORSTER: You mustn't be troubled about this; I shall soon find a berth with some other company, elsewhere.

DR. STOCKMANN: And this is that man Vik! A wealthy man, independent of everyone! Faugh!

HORSTER: Oh, for that matter, he's a very well-meaning man. He said himself he would gladly have kept me on if only he dared ——

DR. STOCKMANN: But he didn't dare? Of course not!

HORSTER: It's not so easy, he said, when you belong to a party ——

DR. STOCKMANN: My gentleman has hit it there! A party is like a sausage-machine; it grinds all the brains together in one mash; and that's why we see nothing but porridge-heads and pulp-heads all around!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Now really, Thomas!

PETRA [*to HORSTER*]: If only you hadn't seen us home, perhaps it would not have come to this.

HORSTER: I don't regret it.

PETRA [*gives him her hand*]: Thank you for that!

HORSTER [*to DR. STOCKMANN*]: And then, too, I wanted to tell you this: if you are really determined to go abroad, I've thought of another way ——

DR. STOCKMANN: That's good — if only we can get off quickly ——

MRS. STOCKMANN: Hush! Isn't that a knock?

PETRA: I believe it is uncle.

DR. STOCKMANN: Aha! [*Calls.*] Come in!

MRS. STOCKMANN: My dear Thomas, now do promise me ——

*The BURGOMASTER enters from the hall.*

BURGOMASTER [*in the doorway*]: Oh, you are engaged. Then I'd better ——

DR. STOCKMANN: No, no; come in.

BURGOMASTER: But I wanted to speak to you alone.

MRS. STOCKMANN: We can go into the sitting-room.

HORSTER: And I shall look in again presently.

DR. STOCKMANN: No, no; go with the ladies, Captain Horster; I must hear more about ——

HORSTER: All right, then I'll wait.

*[He follows MRS. STOCKMANN and PETRA into the sitting-room. The BURGOMASTER says nothing, but casts glances at the windows.]*

DR. STOCKMANN: I dare say you find it rather draughty here today? Put on your cap.

BURGOMASTER: Thanks, if I may. [*Does so.*] I fancy I caught cold yesterday evening. I stood there shivering ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Really. On my soul, now, I found it quite warm enough.

BURGOMASTER: I regret that it was not in my power to prevent these nocturnal excesses.

DR. STOCKMANN: Have you anything else in particular to say to me?

BURGOMASTER [*producing a large letter*]: I have this document for you from the Directors of the Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN: My dismissal?

BURGOMASTER: Yes; dated from today. [*Places the letter on the table.*] We are very sorry — but frankly, we dared not do otherwise, on account of public opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN [*smiling*]: Dare not? I've heard that phrase already today.

BURGOMASTER: I beg you to realise your position clearly. For the future, you cannot count upon any sort of practice in the town.

DR. STOCKMANN: Devil take the practice! But how can you be so sure of that?

BURGOMASTER: The House-owners' Association is sending round a circular from house to house, in which all well-disposed citizens are called upon not to employ you; and I dare swear that not a single head of a family will venture to refuse his signature; he simply dare not.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, well; I don't doubt that. But what then?

BURGOMASTER: If I might advise, I would suggest that you should leave the town for a time —

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, I've had some such idea in my mind already.

BURGOMASTER: Good. And when you have had six months or so for mature deliberation, if you could make up your mind to acknowledge your error, with a few words of regret —

DR. STOCKMANN: I might perhaps be reinstated, you think?

BURGOMASTER: Perhaps it's not quite out of the question.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, but how about public opinion? You daren't, on account of public opinion.

BURGOMASTER: Opinion is extremely variable. And, to speak candidly, it is of the greatest importance for us to have such an admission under your own hand.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, I dare say it would be mightily convenient for you! But you remember what I've said to you before about such foxes' tricks!

BURGOMASTER: At that time your position was infinitely more favourable; at that time you thought you had the whole town at your back —

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, and now I have the whole town on my back — [*Flaring up.*] But no — not if I had the devil and his dam on my back —! Never — never, I tell you!

BURGOMASTER: The father of a family has no right to act as you are doing. You have no right to do it, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: I have no right! There's only one thing in the world that a free man has no right to do; and do you know what that is?

BURGOMASTER: No.

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course not; but *I* will tell you. A free man has no right to

wallow in filth like a cur; he has no right to act so that he ought to spit in his own face!

BURGOMASTER: That sounds extremely plausible; and if there were not another explanation of your obstinacy — but we all know there is —

DR. STOCKMANN: What do you mean by that?

BURGOMASTER: You understand well enough. But as your brother, and as a man who knows the world, I warn you not to build too confidently upon prospects and expectations that may very likely come to nothing.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, what on earth are you driving at?

BURGOMASTER: Do you really want me to believe that you are ignorant of the terms of old Morten Kiil's will?

DR. STOCKMANN: I know that the little he has is to go to a home for old and needy artisans. But what has that got to do with me?

BURGOMASTER: To begin with, "the little he has" is no trifle. Morten Kiil is a tolerably wealthy man.

DR. STOCKMANN: I have never had the least notion of that!

BURGOMASTER: H'm — really? Then I suppose you have no notion that a not inconsiderable part of his fortune is to go to your children, you and your wife having a life-interest in it. Has he not told you that?

DR. STOCKMANN: No, I'll be hanged if he has! On the contrary, he has done nothing but grumble about being so preposterously over-taxed. But are you really sure of this, Peter?

BURGOMASTER: I have it from a thoroughly trustworthy source.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, good heavens, then Katrina's provided for — and the children too! Oh, I must tell her — [Calls.] Katrina, Katrina!

BURGOMASTER [*holding him back*]: Hush! don't say anything about it yet.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*opening the door*]: What is it?

DR. STOCKMANN: Nothing, my dear; go in again.

[MRS. STOCKMANN *closes the door.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*pacing up and down*]: Provided for! Only think — all of them provided for! And for life! After all, it's a grand thing to feel yourself secure!

BURGOMASTER: Yes, but that is just what you are not. Morten Kiil can revoke his will any day or hour he chooses.

DR. STOCKMANN: But he won't, my good Peter. The Badger is only too delighted to see me fall foul of you and your wiseacre friends.

BURGOMASTER [*starts and looks searchingly at him*]: Aha! That throws a new light on a good many things.

DR. STOCKMANN: What things?

BURGOMASTER: So the whole affair has been a carefully-concocted intrigue. Your recklessly violent onslaught — in the name of truth — upon the leading men of the town —

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, what of it?

BURGOMASTER: It was nothing but a preconcerted requital for that vindictive old Morten Kiil's will.

DR. STOCKMANN [*almost speechless*]: Peter — you are the most abominable plebeian I have ever known in all my born days.

BURGOMASTER: All is over between us. Your dismissal is irrevocable — for now we have a weapon against you. [*He goes out.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Shame! shame! shame! [*Calls.*] Katrina! The floor must be scrubbed after him! Tell her to come here with a pail — what's her name? con-found it — the girl with the smudge on her nose —

MRS. STOCKMANN [*in the sitting-room doorway*]: Hush, hush, Thomas!

PETRA [*also in the doorway*]: Father, here's grandfather; he wants to know if he can speak to you alone.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, of course he can. [*By the door.*] Come in, father-in-law.

MORTEN KIIL *enters*. DR. STOCKMANN *closes the door behind him*.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, what is it? Sit down.

MORTEN KIIL: I won't sit down. [*Looking about him.*] It looks cheerful here today, Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, don't you think so?

MORTEN KIIL: Sure enough. And you've plenty of fresh air too; you've got your fill of that oxygen you were talking about yesterday. You must have a rare good conscience today, I should think.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, I have.

MORTEN KIIL: So I should suppose. [*Tapping himself on the breast.*] But do you know what I have got here?

DR. STOCKMANN: A good conscience, too, I hope.

MORTEN KIIL: Pooh! No; something far better than that.

[*Takes out a large pocket-book, opens it, and shows STOCKMANN a bundle of papers.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking at him in astonishment*]: Shares in the Baths!

MORTEN KIIL: They weren't difficult to get today.

DR. STOCKMANN: And you've gone and bought these up —?

MORTEN KIIL: All I had the money to pay for.

DR. STOCKMANN: Why, my dear sir, — just when things are in such a desperate way at the Baths —

MORTEN KIIL: If you behave like a reasonable being, you can soon set the Baths all right again.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, you can see for yourself I'm doing all I can. But the people of this town are mad!

MORTEN KIIL: You said yesterday that the worst filth came from my tannery. Now, if that's true, then my grandfather, and my father before me, and I myself, have for ever so many years been poisoning the town with filth, like three

destroying angels. Do you think I'm going to sit quiet under such a reproach?

DR. STOCKMANN: Unfortunately, you can't help it.

MORTEN KIIL: No, thank you. I hold fast to my good name. I've heard that people call me "the Badger." A badger's a sort of a pig, I know; but I'm determined to give them the lie. I will live and die a clean man.

DR. STOCKMANN: And how will you manage that?

MORTEN KIIL: You shall make me clean, Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN: I!

MORTEN KIIL: Do you know what money I've used to buy these shares with? No, you can't know; but now I'll tell you. It's the money Katrina and Petra and the boys are to have after my death. For, you see, I've laid by something after all.

DR. STOCKMANN [*flaring up*]: And you've taken Katrina's money and done this with it!

MORTEN KIIL: Yes; the whole of it is invested in the Baths now. And now I want to see if you're really so stark, staring mad, after all, Stockmann. If you go on making out that these beasts and other abominations dribble down from my tannery, it'll be just as if you were to flay broad stripes of Katrina's skin — and Petra's too, and the boys'. No decent father would ever do that — unless he were a madman.

DR. STOCKMANN [*walking up and down*]: Yes, but I am a madman; I am a madman!

MORTEN KIIL: You surely can't be so raving, ramping mad where your wife and children are concerned.

DR. STOCKMANN [*stopping in front of him*]: Why couldn't you have spoken to me before you went and bought all that rubbish?

MORTEN KIIL: What's done can't be undone.

DR. STOCKMANN [*walking restlessly about*]: If only I weren't so certain about the affair —! But I am absolutely convinced that I'm right.

MORTEN KIIL [*weighing the pocket-book in his hand*]: If you stick to this lunacy, these aren't worth much. [*Puts the book into his pocket.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: But, deuce take it! surely science ought to be able to hit upon some antidote, some sort of prophylactic —

MORTEN KIIL: Do you mean something to kill the beasts?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, or at least to make them harmless.

MORTEN KIIL: Couldn't you try ratsbane?

DR. STOCKMANN: Oh, nonsense, nonsense! — But since everyone declares it's nothing but fancy, why fancy let it be! Let them have it their own way! Haven't the ignorant, narrow-hearted curs reviled me as an enemy of the people? — and weren't they on the point of tearing the clothes off my back?

MORTEN KIIL: And they've smashed all your windows for you too!

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, and then there's one's duty to one's family! I must talk that over with Katrina; such things are more in her line.

MORTEN KIIL: That's right! You just follow the advice of a sensible woman.

DR. STOCKMANN [*turning upon him angrily*]: How could you act so preposterously! Risking Katrina's money, and putting me to this horrible torture! When I look at you, I seem to see the devil himself ——!

MORTEN KIIL: Then I'd better be off. But I must hear from you, yes or no, by two o'clock. If it's no, all the shares go to the Hospital — and that this very day.

DR. STOCKMANN: And what will Katrina get?

MORTEN KIIL: Not a rap.

[*The door leading to the hall opens. HOVSTAD and ASLAKSEN are seen outside it.*]

MORTEN KIIL: Hullo! look at these two.

DR. STOCKMANN [*staring at them*]: What! Do you actually venture to come here?

HOVSTAD: Why, to be sure we do.

ASLAKSEN: You see, we've something to discuss with you.

MORTEN KIIL [*whispers*]: Yes or no — by two o'clock.

ASLAKSEN [*with a glance at HOVSTAD*]: Aha!

[MORTEN KIIL *goes out.*]

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, what do you want with me? Be brief.

HOVSTAD: I can quite understand that you resent our attitude at the meeting yesterday ——

DR. STOCKMANN: Your attitude, you say? Yes, it was a pretty attitude! I call it the attitude of cowards — of old women —— Shame upon you!

HOVSTAD: Call it what you will; but we could not act otherwise.

DR. STOCKMANN: You dared not, I suppose? Isn't that so?

HOVSTAD: Yes, if you like to put it so.

ASLAKSEN: But why didn't you just say a word to us beforehand? The merest hint to Mr. Hovstad or to me ——

DR. STOCKMANN: A hint? What about?

ASLAKSEN: About what was really behind it all.

DR. STOCKMANN: I don't in the least understand you!

ASLAKSEN [*nods confidentially*]: Oh, yes, you do, Dr. Stockmann.

HOVSTAD: It's no good making a mystery of it any longer.

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking from one to the other*]: Why, what in the devil's name ——!

ASLAKSEN: May I ask — isn't your father-in-law going about the town buying up all the Bath stock?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, he has been buying Bath stock today but ——

ASLAKSEN: It would have been more prudent to let somebody else do that — someone not so closely connected with you.

HOVSTAD: And then you ought not to have appeared in the matter under your own name. No one need have known that the attack on the Baths came from you. You should have taken me into your counsels, Dr. Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN [*stares straight in front of him; a light seems to break in upon him, and he says as though thunderstruck*]: Is this possible? Can such things be?

ASLAKSEN [*smiling*]: It's plain enough that they can. But they ought to be managed delicately, you understand.

HOVSTAD: And there ought to be more people in it; for the responsibility always falls more lightly when there are several to share it.

DR. STOCKMANN [*calmly*]: In one word, gentlemen — what is it you want?

ASLAKSEN: Mr. Hovstad can best —

HOVSTAD: No, you explain, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN: Well, it's this: now that we know how the matter really stands, we believe we can venture to place the *People's Messenger* at your disposal.

DR. STOCKMANN: You can venture to now, eh? But how about public opinion? Aren't you afraid of bringing down a storm upon us?

HOVSTAD: We must manage to ride out the storm.

ASLAKSEN: And you must be ready to put about quickly, Doctor. As soon as your attack has done its work —

DR. STOCKMANN: As soon as my father-in-law and I have bought up the shares at a discount, you mean?

HOVSTAD: I presume it is mainly on scientific grounds that you want to take the management of the Baths into your own hands.

DR. STOCKMANN: Of course; it was on scientific grounds that I got the old Badger to stand in with me. And then we'll tinker up the water-works a little, and potter about a bit down at the beach, without its costing the town sixpence. That ought to do the business? Eh?

HOVSTAD: I think so — if you have the *Messenger* to back you up.

ASLAKSEN: In a free community the press is a power, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, indeed; and so is public opinion. And you, Mr. Aslaksen — I suppose you will answer for the House-owners' Association?

ASLAKSEN: Both for the House-owners' Association and the Temperance Society. You may make your mind easy.

DR. STOCKMANN: But, gentlemen — really I'm quite ashamed to mention such a thing — but — what return —?

HOVSTAD: Of course, we should prefer to give you our support for nothing. But the *Messenger* is not very firmly established; it's not getting on as it ought to; and I should be very sorry to have to stop the paper just now, when there's so much to be done in general politics.

DR. STOCKMANN: Naturally; that would be very hard for a friend of the people like you. [*Flaring up.*] But I — I am an enemy of the people! [*Striding about the room.*] Where's my stick? Where the devil is my stick?

HOVSTAD: What do you mean?

ASLAKSEN: Surely you wouldn't —

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still*]: And suppose I don't give you a single farthing out of all my shares? You must remember we rich folk don't like parting with our money.

HOVSTAD: And you must remember that this business of the shares can be represented in two ways.

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, you are the man for that; if I don't come to the rescue of the *Messenger*, you'll manage to put a vile complexion on the affair; you'll hunt me down, I suppose — bait me — try to throttle me as a dog throttles a hare!

HOVSTAD: That's a law of nature — every animal fights for its own subsistence.

ASLAKSEN: And must take its food where it can find it, you know.

DR. STOCKMANN: Then see if you can't find some out in the gutter; [*Striding about the room.*] for now, by heaven! we shall see which is the strongest animal of us three. [*Finds his umbrella and brandishes it.*] Now, look here —!

HOVSTAD: You surely don't mean to assault us!

ASLAKSEN: I say, be careful with that umbrella.

DR. STOCKMANN: Out at the window with you, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD [*by the hall door*]: Are you utterly crazy?

DR. STOCKMANN: Out at the window, Mr. Aslaksen! Jump, I tell you! Be quick about it!

ASLAKSEN [*running round the writing-table*]: Moderation, Doctor; I'm not at all strong; I can't stand much — [*Screams.*] Help! help!

MRS. STOCKMANN, PETRA, and HORSTER enter from sitting-room.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Good heavens, Thomas! What can be the matter?

DR. STOCKMANN [*brandishing the umbrella*]: Jump, I tell you! Out into the gutter!

HOVSTAD: An unprovoked assault! I call you to witness, Captain Horster.

[*Rushes off through the hall.*]

ASLAKSEN [*bewildered*]: If one only knew the local situation —!

[*He slinks out by the sitting-room door.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*holding back the DOCTOR*]: Now, do restrain yourself, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN [*throwing down the umbrella*]: I'll be hanged if they haven't got off after all.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Why, what can they have wanted with you?

DR. STOCKMANN: I'll tell you afterwards; I have other things to think of now.

[*Goes to the table and writes on a visiting-card.*] Look here, Katrina: what's written here?

MRS. STOCKMANN: Three big Noes; what does that mean?

DR. STOCKMANN: That I'll tell you afterwards, too. [*Handing the card.*] There,



Petra; let smudgy-face run to the Badger's with this as fast as she can. Be quick!

[PETRA goes out through the hall with the card.]

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, if I haven't had visits today from all the emissaries of the devil! But now I'll sharpen my pen against them till it becomes a goad; I'll dip it in gall and venom; I'll hurl my inkstand straight at their skulls.

MRS. STOCKMANN: You forget we are going away, Thomas.

PETRA returns.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well?

PETRA: She has gone.

DR. STOCKMANN: Good. Going away, do you say? No, I'll be damned if we do; we stay where we are, Katrina!

PETRA: Stay!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Here in the town?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, here; the field of battle is here; here the fight must be fought; here I will conquer! As soon as my trousers are mended, I shall go out into the town and look for a house; we must have a roof over our heads for the winter.

HORSTER: That you can have in my house.

DR. STOCKMANN: Can I?

HORSTER: Yes, there's no difficulty about that. I have room enough, and I'm hardly ever at home myself.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, how kind of you, Captain Horster.

PETRA: Thank you!

DR. STOCKMANN [*shaking his hand*]: Thanks, thanks! So that is off my mind. And this very day I shall set to work in earnest. Oh, there's no end of work to be done here, Katrina! It's a good thing I shall have all my time at my disposal now; for you must know I've had notice from the Baths —

MRS. STOCKMANN [*sighing*]: Oh, yes, I was expecting that.

DR. STOCKMANN: — And now they want to take away my practice as well. But let them! The poor I shall keep anyhow — those that can't pay; and, good Lord! it's they that need me most. But by heaven! I'll make them listen to me; I'll preach to them in season and out of season, as the saying goes.

MRS. STOCKMANN: My dear Thomas, I should have thought you had learnt what good preaching does.

DR. STOCKMANN: You really are absurd, Katrina. Am I to let myself be beaten off the field by public opinion, and the compact majority, and all that sort of devilry? No, thank you! Besides, my point is so simple, so clear and straightforward. I only want to drive it into the heads of these curs that the Liberals are the craftiest foes free men have to face; that party-programmes wring the necks of all young and living truths; that considerations of expediency

turn justice and morality upside down, until life here becomes simply unlivable. Come, Captain Horster, don't you think I shall be able to make the people understand that?

HORSTER: Maybe; I don't know much about these things myself.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, you see — this is the way of it! It's the party-leaders that must be exterminated. For a party-leader is just like a wolf, you see — like a ravening wolf; he must devour a certain number of smaller animals a year, if he's to exist at all. Just look at Hovstad and Aslaksen! How many small animals they polish off — or at least mangle and maim, so that they're fit for nothing else but to be house-owners and subscribers to the *People's Messenger*! [*Sits on the edge of the table.*] Just come here, Katrina — see how bravely the sun shines today! And how the blessed fresh spring air blows in upon me!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Yes, if only we could live on sunshine and spring air, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: Well, you'll have to pinch and save to eke them out — and then we shall get on all right. That's what troubles me least. No, what does trouble me is that I don't see any man free enough and high-minded enough to dare to take up my work after me.

PETRA: Oh, don't think about that, father; you have time enough before you. — Why, see, there are the boys already.

*EILIF and MORTEN enter from the sitting-room.*

MRS. STOCKMANN: Have you a holiday today?

MORTEN: No; but we had a fight with the other fellows in playtime —

EILIF: That's not true; it was the other fellows that fought us.

MORTEN: Yes, and then Mr. Rörlund said we had better stop at home for a few days.

DR. STOCKMANN [*snapping his fingers and springing down from the table*]: Now I have it! Now I have it, on my soul! You shall never set foot in school again!

THE BOYS: Never go to school!

MRS. STOCKMANN: Why, Thomas —

DR. STOCKMANN: Never, I say! I shall teach you myself — that's to say, I won't teach you any mortal thing —

MORTEN: Hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN: — but I shall help you to grow into free, high-minded men. — Look here, you'll have to help me, Petra.

PETRA: Yes, father, you may be sure I will.

DR. STOCKMANN: And we'll have our school in the room where they reviled me as an enemy of the people. But we must have more pupils. I must have at least a dozen boys to begin with.

MRS. STOCKMANN: You'll never get them in this town.

DR. STOCKMANN: We shall see. [*To the boys.*] Don't you know any street urchins — any regular ragamuffins —?

MORTEN: Yes, father, I know lots!

DR. STOCKMANN: That's all right; bring me a few of them. I shall experiment with the street-curs for once in a way; there are sometimes excellent heads amongst them.

MORTEN: But what are we to do when we've grown into free and high-minded men?

DR. STOCKMANN: Drive all the wolves out to the far west, boys!

[EILIF looks rather doubtful; MORTEN jumps about shouting "Hurrah!"]

MRS. STOCKMANN: If only the wolves don't drive you out, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN: Are you quite mad, Katrina! Drive me out! Now that I am the strongest man in the town?

MRS. STOCKMANN: The strongest — now?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, I venture to say this: that now I am one of the strongest men in the whole world.

MORTEN: I say, what fun!

DR. STOCKMANN [*in a subdued voice*]: Hush; you mustn't speak about it yet; but I have made a great discovery.

MRS. STOCKMANN: What, another?

DR. STOCKMANN: Yes, of course! [*Gathers them about him, and speaks confidentially.*] This is what I have discovered, you see: the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*shakes her head, smiling*]: Ah, Thomas dear ——!

PETRA [*grasping his hands cheerily*]: Father!

#### QUESTIONS

1. Characterize Dr. Stockmann and his brother on the basis of Act I. What is Dr. Stockmann's chief weakness?
2. What motivates the initial reactions of Hovstad and Billing to Dr. Stockmann's discovery? of Morten Kiil? of the Burgomaster? of Mrs. Stockmann? Discuss the relationship of theme to characterization in this play.
3. Find examples of dramatic irony. Which scene depends for its effect largely upon this device?
4. Which act is built up to the most effective "curtain"? What is the climax of the play?
5. What political tactics are employed against Dr. Stockmann at the meeting? In what ways is the pressure of society invoked against non-conformist Dr. Stockmann and his friends after the meeting? Are such pressures ever employed today? What would have happened to Dr. Stockmann under a communist regime?
6. Which character represents Satan to Dr. Stockmann? Why?
7. Comment on Dr. Stockmann's charge that in politics "considerations of expediency turn justice and morality upside down." What is his solution to the problem of the relationship of the individual to society? Does this solution have any drawbacks?

*George Bernard Shaw, born in Ireland, made a conquest of London in the 1880's and 1890's, first as a drama and music critic, then as the wittiest and most thought-provoking playwright of our times. He wrote Androcles and the Lion (1913) "partly to show Barrie how a play for children should be handled," he said — but added that it would fail unless presented "as a great religious drama — with leonine relief." In 1925 Shaw was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, "as a token of gratitude for a sense of world relief" because he had published nothing that year, he supposed. During his early years in London Shaw was an indefatigable campaigner for Fabian socialism, and later wrote The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism (1928). Among his greatest plays are Candida (1894), Caesar and Cleopatra (1898), Man and Superman (1903), Major Barbara (1905), Androcles and the Lion (1913), Pygmalion (1913), Heartbreak House (1917), and Saint Joan (1924).*

## PROLOGUE

*Overture: forest sounds, roaring of lions, Christian hymn faintly.*

*A jungle path. A lion's roar, a melancholy suffering roar, comes from the jungle. It is repeated nearer. The lion limps from the jungle on three legs, holding up his right forepaw, in which a huge thorn sticks. He sits down and contemplates it. He licks it. He shakes it. He tries to extract it by scraping it along the ground, and hurts himself worse. He roars piteously. He licks it again. Tears drop from his eyes. He limps painfully off the path and lies down under the trees, exhausted with pain. Heaving a long sigh, like wind in a trombone, he goes to sleep.*

*Androcles and his wife Megaera come along the path. He is a small, thin, ridiculous little man who might be any age from thirty to fifty-five. He has sandy hair, watery compassionate blue eyes, sensitive nostrils, and a very presentable forehead; but his good points go no further: his arms and legs and back, though wiry of their kind, look shrivelled and starved. He carries a big bundle, is very poorly clad, and seems tired and hungry.*

*His wife is a rather handsome pampered slattern, well fed and in the prime of life. She has nothing to carry, and has a stout stick to help her along.*

MEGAERA [*suddenly throwing down her stick*]: I wont go another step.

ANDROCLES [*pleading wearily*]: Oh, not again, dear. Whats the good of stopping

every two miles and saying you wont go another step? We must get on to the next village before night. There are wild beasts in this wood: lions, they say. MEGAERA: I dont believe a word of it. You are always threatening me with wild beasts to make me walk the very soul out of my body when I can hardly drag one foot before another. We havnt seen a single lion yet.

ANDROCLES: Well, dear, do you want to see one?

MEGAERA [*tearing the bundle from his back*]: You cruel brute, you dont care how tired I am, or what becomes of me [*she throws the bundle on the ground*]: always thinking of yourself. Self! self! self! always yourself! [*She sits down on the bundle.*]

ANDROCLES [*sitting down sadly on the ground with his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands*]: We all have to think of ourselves occasionally, dear.

MEGAERA: A man ought to think of his wife sometimes.

ANDROCLES: He cant always help it, dear. You make me think of you a good deal. Not that I blame you.

MEGAERA: Blame me! I should think not indeed. Is it my fault that I'm married to you?

ANDROCLES: No, dear: that is my fault.

MEGAERA: Thats a nice thing to say to me. Arnt you happy with me?

ANDROCLES: I dont complain, my love.

MEGAERA: You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

ANDROCLES: I am, my dear.

MEGAERA: Youre not: you glory in it.

ANDROCLES: In what, darling?

MEGAERA: In everything. In making me a slave, and making yourself a laughing-stock. It's not fair. You get me the name of being a shrew with your meek ways, always talking as if butter wouldnt melt in your mouth. And just because I look a big strong woman, and because I'm good hearted and a bit hasty, and because youre always driving me to do things I'm sorry for afterwards, people say "Poor man: what a life his wife leads him!" Oh, if they only knew! And you think I dont know. But I do, I do, [*screaming*] I do.

ANDROCLES: Yes, my dear: I know you do.

MEGAERA: Then why dont you treat me properly and be a good husband to me?

ANDROCLES: What can I do, my dear?

MEGAERA: What can you do! You can return to your duty, and come back to your home and your friends, and sacrifice to the gods as all respectable people do, instead of having us hunted out of house and home for being dirty disreputable blaspheming atheists.

ANDROCLES: I'm not an atheist, dear: I am a Christian.

MEGAERA: Well, isnt that the same thing, only ten times worse? Everybody knows that the Christians are the very lowest of the low.

ANDROCLES: Just like us, dear.

MEGAERA: Speak for yourself. Dont you dare to compare me to common people. My father owned his own public-house; and sorrowful was the day for me when you first came drinking in our bar.

ANDROCLES: I confess I was addicted to it, dear. But I gave it up when I became a Christian.

MEGAERA: Youd much better have remained a drunkard. I can forgive a man being addicted to drink: it's only natural; and I dont deny I like a drop myself sometimes. What I cant stand is your being addicted to Christianity. And whats worse again, your being addicted to animals. How is any woman to keep her house clean when you bring in every stray cat and lost cur and lame duck in the whole countryside? You took the bread out of my mouth to feed them: you know you did: dont attempt to deny it.

ANDROCLES: Only when they were hungry and you were getting too stout, dearie.

MEGAERA: Yes: insult me, do. [*Rising*] Oh! I wont bear it another moment. You used to sit and talk to those dumb brute beasts for hours, when you hadnt a word for me.

ANDROCLES: They never answered back, darling. [*He rises and again shoulders the bundle.*]

MEGAERA: Well, if youre fonder of animals than of your own wife, you can live with them here in the jungle. Ive had enough of them and enough of you. I'm going back. I'm going home.

ANDROCLES [*barring the way back*]: No, dearie: dont take on like that. We cant go back. Weve sold everything: we should starve; and I should be sent to Rome and thrown to the lions —

MEGAERA: Serve you right! I wish the lions joy of you. [*Screaming*] Are you going to get out of my way and let me go home?

ANDROCLES: No, dear —

MEGAERA: Then I'll make my way through the forest; and when I'm eaten by the wild beasts youll know what a wife youve lost. [*She dashes into the jungle and nearly falls over the sleeping lion.*] Oh! Oh! Andy! Andy! [*She totters back and collapses into the arms of Androcles, who, crushed by her weight, falls on his bundle.*]

ANDROCLES [*extracting himself from beneath her and slapping her hands in great anxiety*]: What is it, my precious, my pet? Whats the matter? [*He raises her head. Speechless with terror, she points in the direction of the sleeping lion. He steals cautiously towards the spot indicated by Megaera. She rises with an effort and totters after him.*]

MEGAERA: No, Andy: youll be killed. Come back.

*The lion utters a long snoring sigh. Androcles sees the lion, and recoils fainting into the arms of Megaera, who falls back on the bundle. They roll apart and lie staring in terror at one another. The lion is heard groaning heavily in the jungle.*

ANDROCLES [*whispering*]: Did you see? A lion.

MEGAERA [*despairing*]: The gods have sent him to punish us because you're a Christian. Take me away, Andy. Save me.

ANDROCLES [*rising*]: Meggy: there's one chance for you. It'll take him pretty nigh twenty minutes to eat me (I'm rather stringy and tough) and you can escape in less time than that.

MEGAERA: Oh, don't talk about eating. [*The lion rises with a great groan and limps towards them.*] Oh! [*She faints.*]

ANDROCLES [*quaking, but keeping between the lion and Megaera*]: Don't you come near my wife, do you hear? [*The lion groans. Androcles can hardly stand for trembling.*] Meggy: run. Run for your life. If I take my eye off him, it's all up. [*The lion holds up his wounded paw and flaps it piteously before Androcles.*] Oh, he's lame, poor old chap! He's got a thorn in his paw. A frightfully big thorn. [*Full of sympathy*] Oh, poor old man! Did um get an awful thorn into um's tootsums wootsums? Has it made um too sick to eat a nice little Christian man for um's breakfast? Oh, a nice little Christian man will get um's thorn out for um; and then um shall eat the nice Christian man and the nice Christian man's nice big tender wifey pifey. [*The lion responds by moans of self-pity.*] Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Now, now [*taking the paw in his hand*], um is not to bite and not to scratch, not even if it hurts a very very little. Now make velvet paws. That's right. [*He pulls gingerly at the thorn. The lion, with an angry yell of pain, jerks back his paw so abruptly that Androcles is thrown on his back.*] Steadeeee! Oh, did the nasty cruel little Christian man hurt the sore paw? [*The lion moans assentingly but apologetically.*] Well, one more little pull and it will be all over. Just one little, little, leetle pull; and then um will live happily ever after. [*He gives the thorn another pull. The lion roars and snaps his jaws with a terrifying clash.*] Oh, mustn't frighten um's good kind doctor, um's affectionate nurse. That didn't hurt at all: not a bit. Just one more. Just to shew how the brave big lion can bear pain, not like the little crybaby Christian man. Oopsh! [*The thorn comes out. The lion yells with pain, and shakes his paw wildly.*] That's it! [*Holding up the thorn.*] Now it's out. Now lick um's paw to take away the nasty inflammation. See? [*He licks his own hand. The lion nods intelligently and licks his paw industriously.*] Clever little lionypiony! Understands um's dear old friend Andy Wandy. [*The lion licks his face.*] Yes, kisser Andy Wandy. [*The lion, wagging his tail violently, rises on his hind legs, and embraces Androcles, who makes a wry face and cries*] Velvet paws! Velvet paws! [*The lion draws in his claws.*] That's right. [*He embraces the lion, who finally takes the end of his tail in one paw, places that tight round Androcles' waist, resting it on his hip. Androcles takes the other paw in his hand, stretches out his arm, and the two waltz rapturously round and round and finally away through the jungle.*]

MEGAERA [*who has revived during the waltz*]: Oh, you coward, you haven't danced with me for years; and now you go off dancing with a great brute beast that

you havnt known for ten minutes and that wants to eat your own wife. Coward. Coward! Coward! [*She rushes off after them into the jungle.*]

## ACT I

*Evening. The end of three converging roads to Rome. Three triumphal arches span them where they debouch on a square at the gate of the city. Looking north through the arches one can see the campagna threaded by the three long dusty tracks. On the east and west sides of the square are long stone benches. An old beggar sits on the east side, his bowl at his feet.*

*Through the eastern arch a squad of Roman soldiers tramps along escorting a batch of Christian prisoners of both sexes and all ages, among them one Lavinia, a good-looking resolute young woman, apparently of higher social standing than her fellow-prisoners. A centurion, carrying his vinewood cudgel, trudges alongside the squad, on its right, in command of it. All are tired and dusty; but the soldiers are dogged and indifferent, the Christians lighthearted and determined to treat their hardships as a joke and encourage one another.*

*A bugle is heard far behind on the road, where the rest of the cohort is following.*

CENTURION [*stopping*]: Halt! Orders from the Captain. [*They halt and wait.*] Now then, you Christians, none of your larks. The captain's coming. Mind you behave yourselves. No singing. Look respectful. Look serious, if youre capable of it. See that big building over there! Thats the Coliseum. Thats where youll be thrown to the lions or set to fight the gladiators presently. Think of that; and itll help you to behave properly before the captain. [*The Captain arrives.*] Attention! Salute! [*The soldiers salute.*]

A CHRISTIAN [*cheerfully*]: God bless you, Captain!

CENTURION [*scandalized*]: Silence!

*The Captain, a patrician, handsome, about thirty-five, very cold and distinguished, very superior and authoritative, steps up on a stone seat at the west side of the square, behind the centurion, so as to dominate the others more effectually.*

THE CAPTAIN: Centurion.

CENTURION [*standing at attention and saluting*]: Sir?

THE CAPTAIN [*speaking stiffly and officially*]: You will remind your men, Centurion, that we are now entering Rome. You will instruct them that once inside the gates of Rome they are in the presence of the Emperor. You will make them understand that the lax discipline of the march cannot be permitted here. You will instruct them to shave every day, not every week. You will impress on them particularly that there must be an end to the profanity and blasphemy of singing Christian hymns on the march. I have to reprimand you, Centurion, for not only allowing this, but actually doing it yourself.

CENTURION [*apologetic*]: The men march better, Captain.



THE CAPTAIN: No doubt. For that reason an exception is made in the case of the march called Onward Christian Soldiers. This may be sung, except when marching through the forum or within hearing of the Emperor's palace; but the words must be altered to "Throw them to the Lions."

*The Christians burst into shrieks of uncontrollable laughter, to the great scandal of the Centurion.*

CENTURION: Silence! Silen-n-n-n-nce! Wheres your behavior? Is that the way to listen to an officer? [*To the Captain*] Thats what we have to put up with from these Christians every day, sir. Theyre always laughing and joking something scandalous. Theyve no religion: thats how it is.

LAVINIA: But I think the Captain meant us to laugh, Centurion. It was so funny.

CENTURION: Youll find out how funny it is when youre thrown to the lions tomorrow. [*To the Captain, who looks displeased*] Beg pardon, Sir. [*To the Christians*] Silennnnce!

THE CAPTAIN: You are to instruct your men that all intimacy with Christian prisoners must now cease. The men have fallen into habits of dependence upon the prisoners, especially the female prisoners, for cooking, repairs to uniforms, writing letters, and advice in their private affairs. In a Roman soldier such dependence is inadmissible. Let me see no more of it whilst we are in the city. Further, your orders are that in addressing Christian prisoners, the manners and tone of your men must express abhorrence and contempt. Any shortcoming in this respect will be regarded as a breach of discipline. [*He turns to the prisoners.*] Prisoners.

CENTURION [*fiercely*]: Prisonerrrrrrs! Tention! Silence!

THE CAPTAIN: I call your attention, prisoners, to the fact that you may be called on to appear in the Imperial Circus at any time from tomorrow onwards according to the requirements of the managers. I may inform you that as there is a shortage of Christians just now, you may expect to be called on very soon.

LAVINIA: What will they do to us, Captain?

CENTURION: Silence!

THE CAPTAIN: The women will be conducted into the arena with the wild beasts of the Imperial Menagerie, and will suffer the consequences. The men, if of an age to bear arms, will be given weapons to defend themselves, if they choose, against the Imperial Gladiators.

LAVINIA: Captain: is there no hope that this cruel persecution —

CENTURION [*shocked*]: Silence! Hold your tongue, there. Persecution, indeed!

THE CAPTAIN [*unmoved and somewhat sardonic*]: Persecution is not a term applicable to the acts of the Emperor. The Emperor is the Defender of the Faith. In throwing you to the lions he will be upholding the interests of religion in Rome. If you were to throw him to the lions, that would no doubt be persecution.

*The Christians again laugh heartily.*

CENTURION [*horried*]: Silence, I tell you! Keep silence there. Did anyone ever hear the like of this?

LAVINIA: Captain: there will be nobody to appreciate your jokes when we are gone.

THE CAPTAIN [*unshaken in his official delivery*]: I call the attention of the female prisoner Lavinia to the fact that as the Emperor is a divine personage, her imputation of cruelty is not only treason, but sacrilege. I point out to her further that there is no foundation for the charge, as the Emperor does not desire that any prisoner should suffer; nor can any Christian be harmed save through his or her own obstinacy. All that is necessary is to sacrifice to the gods: a simple and convenient ceremony effected by dropping a pinch of incense on the altar, after which the prisoner is at once set free. Under such circumstances you have only your own perverse folly to blame if you suffer. I suggest to you that if you cannot burn a morsel of incense as a matter of conviction, you might at least do so as a matter of good taste, to avoid shocking the religious convictions of your fellow citizens. I am aware that these considerations do not weigh with Christians; but it is my duty to call your attention to them in order that you may have no ground for complaining of your treatment, or of accusing the Emperor of cruelty when he is shewing you the most signal clemency. Looked at from this point of view, every Christian who has perished in the arena has really committed suicide.

LAVINIA: Captain: your jokes are too grim. Do not think it is easy for us to die. Our faith makes life far stronger and more wonderful in us than when we walked in darkness and had nothing to live for. Death is harder for us than for you: the martyr's agony is as bitter as his triumph is glorious.

THE CAPTAIN [*rather troubled, addressing her personally and gravely*]: A martyr, Lavinia, is a fool. Your death will prove nothing.

LAVINIA: Then why kill me?

THE CAPTAIN: I mean that truth, if there be any truth, needs no martyrs.

LAVINIA: No; but my faith, like your sword, needs testing. Can you test your sword except by staking your life on it?

THE CAPTAIN [*suddenly resuming his official tone*]: I call the attention of the female prisoner to the fact that Christians are not allowed to draw the Emperor's officers into arguments and put questions to them for which the military regulations provide no answer. [*The Christians titter.*]

LAVINIA: Captain: how can you?

THE CAPTAIN: I call the female prisoner's attention specially to the fact that four comfortable homes have been offered her by officers of this regiment, of which she can have her choice the moment she chooses to sacrifice as all wellbred Roman ladies do. I have no more to say to the prisoners.

CENTURION: Dismiss! But stay where you are.

THE CAPTAIN: Centurion: you will remain here with your men in charge of the

prisoners until the arrival of three Christian prisoners in the custody of a cohort of the tenth legion. Among these prisoners you will particularly identify an armorer named Ferrovius, of dangerous character and great personal strength, and a Greek tailor reputed to be a sorcerer, by name Androcles. You will add the three to your charge here and march them all to the Coliseum, where you will deliver them into the custody of the master of the gladiators and take his receipt, countersigned by the keeper of the beasts and the acting manager. You understand your instructions?

CENTURION: Yes, sir.

THE CAPTAIN: Dismiss. [*He throws off his air of parade, and descends from his perch. The Centurion seats himself on it and prepares for a nap, whilst his men stand at ease. The Christians sit down on the west side of the square, glad to rest. Lavinia alone remains standing to speak to the Captain.*]

LAVINIA: Captain: is this man who is to join us the famous Ferrovius, who has made such wonderful conversions in the northern cities?

THE CAPTAIN: Yes. We are warned that he has the strength of an elephant and the temper of a mad bull. Also that he is stark mad. Not a model Christian, it would seem.

LAVINIA: You need not fear him if he is a Christian, Captain.

THE CAPTAIN [*coldly*]: I shall not fear him in any case, Lavinia.

LAVINIA [*her eyes dancing*]: How brave of you, Captain!

THE CAPTAIN: You are right: it was a silly thing to say. [*In a lower tone, humane and urgent*] Lavinia: do Christians know how to love?

LAVINIA [*composedly*]: Yes, Captain: they love even their enemies.

THE CAPTAIN: Is that easy?

LAVINIA: Very easy, Captain, when their enemies are as handsome as you.

THE CAPTAIN: Lavinia: you are laughing at me.

LAVINIA: At you, Captain! Impossible.

THE CAPTAIN: Then you are flirting with me, which is worse. Dont be foolish.

LAVINIA: But such a very handsome captain.

THE CAPTAIN: Incorrigible! [*Urgently*] Listen to me. The men in that audience tomorrow will be the vilest of voluptuaries: men in whom the only passion excited by a beautiful woman is a lust to see her tortured and torn shrieking limb from limb. It is a crime to gratify that passion. It is offering yourself for violation by the whole rabble of the streets and the riff-raff of the court at the same time. Why will you not choose rather a kindly love and an honorable alliance?

LAVINIA: They cannot violate my soul. I alone can do that by sacrificing to false gods.

THE CAPTAIN: Sacrifice then to the true God. What does his name matter? We call him Jupiter. The Greeks call him Zeus. Call him what you will as you drop the incense on the altar flame; He will understand.

LAVINIA: No. I couldnt. That is the strange thing, Captain, that a little pinch of incense should make all that difference. Religion is such a great thing that when I meet really religious people we are friends at once, no matter what name we give to the divine will that made us and moves us. Oh, do you think that I, a woman, would quarrel with you for sacrificing to a woman god like Diana, if Diana meant to you what Christ means to me? No: we should kneel side by side before her altar like two children. But when men who believe neither in my god nor in their own — men who do not know the meaning of the word religion — when these men drag me to the foot of an iron statue that has become the symbol of the terror and darkness through which they walk, of their cruelty and greed, of their hatred of God and their oppression of man — when they ask me to pledge my soul before the people that this hideous idol is God, and that all this wickedness and falsehood is divine truth, I cannot do it, not if they could put a thousand cruel deaths on me. I tell you, it is physically impossible. Listen, Captain: did you ever try to catch a mouse in your hand? Once there was a dear little mouse that used to come out and play on my table as I was reading. I wanted to take him in my hand and caress him; and sometimes he got among my books so that he could not escape me when I stretched out my hand. And I did stretch out my hand; but it always came back in spite of me. I was not afraid of him in my heart; but my hand refused: it is not in the nature of my hand to touch a mouse. Well, Captain, if I took a pinch of incense in my hand and stretched it out over the altar fire, my hand would come back. My body would be true to my faith even if you could corrupt my mind. And all the time I should believe more in Diana than my persecutors have ever believed in anything. Can you understand that?

THE CAPTAIN [*simply*]: Yes; I understand that. But my hand would not come back. The hand that holds the sword has been trained not to come back from anything but victory.

LAVINIA: Not even from death?

THE CAPTAIN: Least of all from death.

LAVINIA: Then I must not come back from death either. A woman has to be braver than a soldier.

THE CAPTAIN: Prouder, you mean.

LAVINIA [*startled*]: Prouder! You call our courage pride!

THE CAPTAIN: There is no such thing as courage: there is only pride. You Christians are the proudest devils on earth.

LAVINIA [*hurt*]: Pray God then my pride may never become a false pride. [*She turns away as if she did not wish to continue the conversation, but softens and says to him with a smile.*] Thank you for trying to save me.

THE CAPTAIN: I knew it was no use; but one tries in spite of one's knowledge

LAVINIA: Something stirs, even in the iron breast of a Roman soldier?

THE CAPTAIN: I will soon be iron again. I have seen many women die, and forgotten them in a week.

LAVINIA: Remember me for a fortnight, handsome Captain. I shall be watching you, perhaps.

THE CAPTAIN: From the skies? Do not deceive yourself, Lavinia. There is no future for you beyond the grave.

LAVINIA: What does that matter? Do you think I am only running away from the terrors of life into the comfort of heaven? If there were no future, or if the future were one of torment, I should have to go just the same. The hand of God is upon me.

THE CAPTAIN: Yes: when all is said, we are both patricians, Lavinia, and must die for our beliefs. Farewell. [*He offers her his hand. She takes it and presses it. He walks away, trim and calm. She looks after him for a moment, and cries a little as he disappears through the eastern arch. A trumpet-call is heard from the road through the western arch.*]

CENTURION [*waking up and rising*]: Cohort of the tenth with prisoners. Two file out with me to receive them. [*He goes out through the western arch, followed by four soldiers in two files.*]

*Lentulus and Metellus come into the square from the west side with a little retinue of servants. Both are young courtiers, dressed in the extremity of fashion. Lentulus is slender, fair-haired, epicene. Metellus is manly, compactly built, olive-skinned, not a talker.*

LENTULUS: Christians, by Jove! Lets chaff them.

METELLUS: Awful brutes. If you knew as much about them as I do you wouldnt want to chaff them. Leave them to the lions.

LENTULUS [*indicating Lavinia, who is still looking towards the arches after the Captain*]: That woman's got a figure. [*He walks past her, staring at her invitingly; but she is preoccupied and is not conscious of him.*] Do you turn the other cheek when they kiss you?

LAVINIA [*starting*]: What?

LENTULUS: Do you turn the other cheek when they kiss you, fascinating Christian?

LAVINIA: Dont be foolish. [*To Metellus, who has remained on her right, so that she is between them*] Please dont let your friend behave like a cad before the soldiers. How are they to respect and obey patricians if they see them behaving like street boys? [*Sharply to Lentulus*] Pull yourself together, man. Hold your head up. Keep the corners of your mouth firm; and treat me respectfully. What do you take me for?

LENTULUS [*irresolutely*]: Look here, you know: I — you — I —

LAVINIA: Stuff! Go about your business. [*She turns decisively away and sits down with her comrades, leaving him disconcerted.*]

METELLUS: You didnt get much out of that. I told you they were brutes.

LENTULUS: Plucky little filly! I suppose she thinks I care. [*With an air of indifference he strolls with Metellus to the east side of the square, where they stand watching the return of the Centurion through the western arch with his men, escorting three prisoners: Ferrovius, Androcles, and Spintho. Ferrovius is a powerful, choleric man in the prime of life, with large nostrils, staring eyes, and a thick neck: a man whose sensibilities are keen and violent to the verge of madness. Spintho is a debauchee, the wreck of a good-looking man gone hopelessly to the bad. Androcles is overwhelmed with grief, and is restraining his tears with great difficulty.*]

CENTURION [*to Lavinia*]: Here are some pals for you. This little bit is Ferrovius that you talk so much about. [*Ferrovius turns on him threateningly. The Centurion holds up his left forefinger in admonition.*] Now remember that you're a Christian, and that you've got to return good for evil. [*Ferrovius controls himself convulsively; moves away from temptation to the east side near Lentulus; clasps his hands in silent prayer; and throws himself on his knees.*] That's the way to manage them, eh! This fine fellow [*indicating Androcles, who comes to his left, and makes Lavinia a heart-broken salutation*] is a sorcerer. A Greek tailor, he is. A real sorcerer, too: no mistake about it. The tenth marches with a leopard at the head of the column. He made a pet of the leopard; and now he's crying at being parted from it. [*Androcles sniffs lamentably.*] Aint you, old chap? Well, cheer up, we march with a Billy goat [*Androcles brightens up*] that's killed two leopards and ate a turkey-cock. You can have him for a pet if you like. [*Androcles, quite consoled, goes past the Centurion to Lavinia, and sits down contentedly on the ground on her left.*] This dirty dog [*collaring Spintho*] is a real Christian. He mobs the temples, he does [*at each accusation he gives the neck of Spintho's tunic a twist*]; he goes smashing things mad drunk, he does; he steals the gold vessels, he does; he assaults the priestesses, he does — yah! [*He flings Spintho into the middle of the group of prisoners.*] You're the sort that makes duty a pleasure, you are.

SPINTHO [*gasping*]: That's it: strangle me. Kick me. Beat me. Revile me. Our Lord was beaten and reviled. That's my way to heaven. Every martyr goes to heaven, no matter what he's done. That is so, isn't it, brother?

CENTURION: Well, if you're going to heaven, I don't want to go there. I wouldn't be seen with you.

LENTULUS: Haw! Good! [*Indicating the kneeling Ferrovius.*] Is this one of the turn-the-other-cheek gentlemen, Centurion?

CENTURION: Yes, sir. Lucky for you too, sir, if you want to take any liberties with him.

LENTULUS [*to Ferrovius*]: You turn the other cheek when you're struck, I'm told.

FERROVIUS [*slowly turning his great eyes on him*]: Yes, by the grace of God, I do, now.

LENTULUS: Not that you're a coward, of course; but out of pure piety.

FERROVIUS: I fear God more than man; at least I try to.

LENTULUS: Lets see. [*He strikes him on the cheek. Androcles makes a wild movement to rise and interfere; but Lavinia holds him down, watching Ferrovius intently. Ferrovius, without flinching, turns the other cheek. Lentulus, rather out of countenance, titters foolishly, and strikes him again feebly.*] You know, I should feel ashamed if I let myself be struck like that, and took it lying down. But then I'm not a Christian: I'm a man. [*Ferrovius rises impressively and towers over him. Lentulus becomes white with terror; and a shade of green flickers in his cheek for a moment.*]

FERROVIUS [*with the calm of a steam hammer*]: I have not always been faithful. The first man who struck me as you have just struck me was a stronger man than you: he hit me harder than I expected. I was tempted and fell; and it was then that I first tasted bitter shame. I never had a happy moment after that until I had knelt and asked his forgiveness by his bedside in the hospital. [*Putting his hands on Lentulus's shoulders with paternal weight*] But now I have learnt to resist with a strength that is not my own. I am not ashamed now, nor angry.

LENTULUS [*uneasily*]: Er — good evening. [*He tries to move away.*]

FERROVIUS [*gripping his shoulders*]: Oh, do not harden your heart, young man. Come: try for yourself whether our way is not better than yours. I will now strike you on one cheek; and you will turn the other and learn how much better you will feel than if you gave way to the promptings of anger. [*He holds him with one hand and clenches the other fist.*]

LENTULUS: Centurion: I call on you to protect me.

CENTURION: You asked for it, sir. It's no business of ours. Youve had two whacks at him. Better pay him a trifle and square it that way.

LENTULUS: Yes, of course. [*To Ferrovius*] It was only a bit of fun, I assure you: I meant no harm. Here. [*He proffers a gold coin.*]

FERROVIUS [*taking it and throwing it to the old beggar, who snatches it up eagerly and hobbles off to spend it*]: Give all thou hast to the poor. Come, friend: courage! I may hurt your body for a moment; but your soul will rejoice in the victory of the spirit over the flesh. [*He prepares to strike.*]

ANDROCLES: Easy, Ferrovius, easy: you broke the last man's jaw.

*Lentulus, with a moan of terror, attempts to fly; but Ferrovius holds him ruthlessly.*

FERROVIUS: Yes; but I saved his soul. What matters a broken jaw?

LENTULUS: Dont touch me, do you hear? The law —

FERROVIUS: The law will throw me to the lions tomorrow; what worse could it do were I to slay you? Pray for strength; and it shall be given to you.

LENTULUS: Let me go. Your religion forbids you to strike me.

FERROVIUS: On the contrary, it commands me to strike you. How can you turn the other cheek, if you are not first struck on the one cheek?

LENTULUS [*almost in tears*]: But I'm convinced already that what you said is quite right. I apologize for striking you.

FERROVIUS [*greatly pleased*]: My son: have I softened your heart? Has the good seed fallen in a fruitful place? Are your feet turning towards a better path?

LENTULUS [*abjectly*]: Yes, yes. Theres a great deal in what you say.

FERROVIUS [*radiant*]: Join us. Come to the lions. Come to suffering and death.

LENTULUS [*falling on his knees and bursting into tears*]: Oh, help me. Mother! mother!

FERROVIUS: These tears will water your soul and make it bring forth good fruit, my son. God has greatly blessed my efforts at conversion. Shall I tell you a miracle — yes, a miracle — wrought by me in Cappadocia? A young man — just such a one as you, with golden hair like yours — scoffed at and struck me as you scoffed at and struck me. I sat up all night with that youth wrestling for his soul; and in the morning not only was he a Christian, but his hair was as white as snow. [*Lentulus falls in a dead faint.*] There, there: take him away. The spirit has overwrought him, poor lad. Carry him gently to his house; and leave the rest to heaven.

CENTURION: Take him home. [*The servants, intimidated, hastily carry him out. Metellus is about to follow when Ferrovius lays his hand on his shoulder.*]

FERROVIUS: You are his friend, young man. You will see that he is taken safely home.

METELLUS [*with awestruck civility*]: Certainly, sir. I shall do whatever you think best. Most happy to have made your acquaintance, I'm sure. You may depend on me. Good evening, sir.

FERROVIUS [*with unction*]: The blessing of heaven upon you and him.

*Metellus follows Lentulus. The Centurion returns to his seat to resume his interrupted nap. The deepest awe has settled on the spectators. Ferrovius, with a long sigh of happiness, goes to Lavinia, and offers her his hand.*

LAVINIA [*taking it*]: So that is how you convert people, Ferrovius.

FERROVIUS: Yes: there has been a blessing on my work in spite of my unworthiness and my backslidings — all through my wicked, devilish temper. This man —

ANDROCLES [*hastily*]: Dont slap me on the back, brother. She knows you mean me.

FERROVIUS: How I wish I were weak like our brother here! for then I should perhaps be meek and gentle like him. And yet there seems to be a special providence that makes my trials less than his. I hear tales of the crowd scoffing and casting stones and reviling the brethren; but when I come, all this stops: my influence calms the passions of the mob: they listen to me in silence; and infidels are often converted by a straight heart-to-heart talk with me. Every day I feel happier, more confident. Every day lightens the load of the great terror.



LAVINIA: The great terror? What is that?

*Ferrovius shakes his head and does not answer. He sits down beside her on her left, and buries his face in his hands in gloomy meditation.*

ANDROCLES: Well, you see, sister, he's never quite sure of himself. Suppose at the last moment in the arena, with the gladiators there to fight him, one of them was to say anything to annoy him, he might forget himself and lay that gladiator out.

LAVINIA: That would be splendid.

FERROVIUS [*springing up in horror*]: What!

ANDROCLES: Oh, sister!

FERROVIUS: Splendid to betray my master, like Peter! Splendid to act like any common blackguard in the day of my proving! Woman: you are no Christian. [*He moves away from her to the middle of the square, as if her neighborhood contaminated him.*]

LAVINIA [*laughing*]: You know, Ferrovius, I am not always a Christian. I don't think anybody is. There are moments when I forget all about it, and something comes out quite naturally, as it did then.

SPINTHO: What does it matter? If you die in the arena, you'll be a martyr; and all martyrs go to heaven, no matter what they have done. That's so, isn't it, Ferrovius?

FERROVIUS: Yes: that is so, if we are faithful to the end.

LAVINIA: I'm not so sure.

SPINTHO: Don't say that. That's blasphemy. Don't say that, I tell you. We shall be saved, no matter what we do.

LAVINIA: Perhaps you men will all go into heaven bravely and in triumph, with your heads erect and golden trumpets sounding for you. But I am sure I shall only be allowed to squeeze myself in through a little crack in the gate after a great deal of begging. I am not good always: I have moments only.

SPINTHO: You're talking nonsense, woman. I tell you, martyrdom pays all scores.

ANDROCLES: Well, let us hope so, brother, for your sake. You've had a gay time, haven't you? with your raids on the temples. I can't help thinking that heaven will be very dull for a man of your temperament. [*Spintho snarls.*] Don't be angry: I say it only to console you in case you should die in your bed tonight in the natural way. There's a lot of plague about.

SPINTHO [*rising and running about in abject terror*]: I never thought of that. Oh Lord, spare me to be martyred. Oh, what a thought to put into the mind of a brother! Oh, let me be martyred today, now. I shall die in the night and go to hell. You're a sorcerer: you've put death into my mind. Oh, curse you, curse you! [*He tries to seize Androcles by the throat.*]

FERROVIUS [*holding him in a grasp of iron*]: What's this, brother? Anger! Violence! Raising your hand to a brother Christian!

SPINTHO: It's easy for you. You're strong. Your nerves are all right. But I'm full

of disease. [*Ferrovius takes his hand from him with instinctive disgust.*] I've drunk all my nerves away. I shall have the horrors all night.

ANDROCLES [*sympathetic*]: Oh, don't take on so, brother. We're all sinners.

SPINTHO [*snivelling, trying to feel consoled*]: Yes: I daresay if the truth were known, you're all as bad as I am.

LAVINIA [*contemptuously*]: Does that comfort you?

FERROVIUS [*sternly*]: Pray, man, pray.

SPINTHO: What's the good of praying? If we're martyred we shall go to heaven, shant we, whether we pray or not?

FERROVIUS: What's that? Not pray! [*Seizing him again*] Pray this instant, you dog, you rotten hound, you slimy snake, you beastly goat, or —

SPINTHO: Yes: beat me: kick me. I forgive you: mind that.

FERROVIUS [*spurning him with loathing*]: Yah! [*Spintho reels away and falls in front of Ferrovius.*]

ANDROCLES [*reaching out and catching the skirt of Ferrovius's tunic*]: Dear brother: if you wouldn't mind — just for my sake —

FERROVIUS: Well?

ANDROCLES: Don't call him by the names of the animals. We've no right to. I've had such friends in dogs. A pet snake is the best of company. I was nursed on goat's milk. Is it fair to them to call the like of him a dog or a snake or a goat?

FERROVIUS: I only meant that they have no souls.

ANDROCLES [*anxiously protesting*]: Oh, believe me, they have. Just the same as you and me. I really don't think I could consent to go to heaven if I thought there were to be no animals there. Think of what they suffer here.

FERROVIUS: That's true. Yes: that is just. They will have their share in heaven.

SPINTHO [*who has picked himself up and is sneaking past Ferrovius on his left, sneers derisively*]!!

FERROVIUS [*turning on him fiercely*]: What's that you say?

SPINTHO [*cowering*]: Nothing.

FERROVIUS [*clenching his fist*]: Do animals go to heaven or not?

SPINTHO: I never said they didn't.

FERROVIUS [*implacable*]: Do they or do they not?

SPINTHO: They do: they do. [*Scrambling out of Ferrovius's reach*] Oh, curse you for frightening me!

*A bugle call is heard.*

CENTURION [*waking up*]: Tention! Form as before. Now then, prisoners: up with you and trot along spry. [*The soldiers fall in. The Christians rise.*]

*A man with an ox goad comes running through the central arch.*

THE OX DRIVER: Here, you soldiers! clear out of the way for the Emperor.

CENTURION: Emperor! Where's the Emperor? You ain't the Emperor, are you?

THE OX DRIVER: It's the menagerie service. My team of oxen is drawing the new lion to the Coliseum. You clear the road.

CENTURION: What! Go in after you in your dust, with half the town at the heels of you and your lion! Not likely. We go first.

THE OX DRIVER: The menagerie service is the Emperor's personal retinue. You clear out, I tell you.

CENTURION: You tell me, do you? Well, I'll tell you something. If the lion is menagerie service, the lion's dinner is menagerie service too. This [*pointing to the Christians*] is the lion's dinner. So back with you to your bullocks double quick; and learn your place. March. [*The soldiers start.*] Now then, you Christians: step out there.

LAVINIA [*marching*]: Come along, the rest of the dinner. I shall be the olives and anchovies.

ANOTHER CHRISTIAN [*laughing*]: I shall be the soup.

ANOTHER: I shall be the fish.

ANOTHER: Ferrovius shall be the roast boar.

FERROVIUS [*heavily*]: I see the joke. Yes, yes: I shall be the roast boar. Ha! ha! [*He laughs conscientiously and marches out with them.*]

ANDROCLES [*following*]: I shall be the mince pie. [*Each announcement is received with a louder laugh by all the rest as the joke catches on.*]

CENTURION [*scandalized*]: Silence! Have some sense of your situation. Is this the way for martyrs to behave? [*To Spintho, who is quaking and loitering*] I know what you'll be at that dinner. You'll be the emetic. [*He shoves him rudely along.*]

SPINTHO: It's too dreadful: I'm not fit to die.

CENTURION: Fitter than you are to live, you swine.

*They pass from the square westward. The oxen, drawing a waggon with a great wooden cage and the lion in it, arrive through the central arch.*

## ACT II

*Behind the Emperor's box at the Coliseum, where the performers assemble before entering the arena. In the middle a wide passage leading to the arena descends from the floor level under the imperial box. On both sides of this passage steps ascend to a landing at the back entrance to the box. The landing forms a bridge across the passage. At the entrance to the passage are two bronze mirrors, one on each side.*

*On the west side of this passage, on the right hand of anyone coming from the box and standing on the bridge, the martyrs are sitting on the steps. Lavinia is seated half-way up, thoughtful, trying to look death in the face. On her left Androcles consoles himself by nursing a cat. Ferrovius stands behind them, his eyes blazing, his figure stiff with intense resolution. At the foot of the steps crouches Spintho, with his head clutched in his hands, full of horror at the approach of martyrdom.*

*On the east side of the passage the gladiators are standing and sitting at ease, waiting, like the Christians, for their turn in the arena. One (Retiarius) is a nearly naked man with a net and a trident. Another (Secutor) is in armor with a sword. He carries a helmet with a barred visor. The editor of the gladiators sits on a chair a little apart from them.*

*The Call Boy enters from the passage.*

THE CALL BOY: Number six. Retiarius versus Secutor.

*The gladiator with the net picks it up. The gladiator with the helmet puts it on; and the two go into the arena, the net thrower taking out a little brush and arranging his hair as he goes, the other tightening his straps and shaking his shoulders loose. Both look at themselves in the mirrors before they enter the passage.*

LAVINIA: Will they really kill one another?

SPINTHO: Yes, if the people turn down their thumbs.

THE EDITOR: You know nothing about it. The people indeed! Do you suppose we would kill a man worth perhaps fifty talents to please the riffraff? I should like to catch any of my men at it.

SPINTHO: I thought —

THE EDITOR [*contemptuously*]: You thought! Who cares what you think? You'll be killed all right enough.

SPINTHO [*groans and again hides his face*]!!!

LAVINIA: Then is nobody ever killed except us poor Christians?

THE EDITOR: If the vestal virgins turn down their thumbs, that's another matter. They're ladies of rank.

LAVINIA: Does the Emperor ever interfere?

THE EDITOR: Oh, yes: he turns his thumb up fast enough if the vestal virgins want to have one of his pet fighting men killed.

ANDROCLES: But don't they ever just only pretend to kill one another? Why shouldn't you pretend to die, and get dragged out as if you were dead; and then get up and go home, like an actor?

THE EDITOR: See here: you want to know too much. There will be no pretending about the new lion: let that be enough for you. He's hungry.

SPINTHO [*groaning with horror*]: Oh, Lord! can't you stop talking about it? Isn't it bad enough for us without that?

ANDROCLES: I'm glad he's hungry. Not that I want him to suffer, poor chap! but then he'll enjoy eating me so much more. There's a cheerful side to everything.

THE EDITOR [*rising and striding over to Androcles*]: Here: don't you be obstinate. Come with me and drop the pinch of incense on the altar. That's all you need do to be let off.

ANDROCLES: No: thank you very much indeed; but I really mustn't.

THE EDITOR: What! Not to save your life?

ANDROCLES: I'd rather not. I couldn't sacrifice to Diana: she's a huntress, you know, and kills things.

THE EDITOR: That don't matter. You can choose your own altar. Sacrifice to Jupiter: he likes animals: he turns himself into an animal when he goes off duty.

ANDROCLES: No: it's very kind of you; but I feel I can't save myself that way.

THE EDITOR: But I don't ask you to do it to save yourself: I ask you to do it to oblige me personally.

ANDROCLES [*scrambling up in the greatest agitation*]: Oh, please don't say that. This is dreadful. You mean so kindly by me that it seems quite horrible to disoblige you. If you could arrange for me to sacrifice when there's nobody looking, I shouldn't mind. But I must go into the arena with the rest. My honor, you know.

THE EDITOR: Honor! The honor of a tailor?

ANDROCLES [*apologetically*]: Well, perhaps honor is too strong an expression.

Still, you know, I couldn't allow the tailors to get a bad name through me.

THE EDITOR: How much will you remember of all that when you smell the beast's breath and see his jaws opening to tear out your throat?

SPINTHO [*rising with a yell of terror*]: I can't bear it. Where's the altar? I'll sacrifice.

FERROVIUS: Dog of an apostate. Iscariot!

SPINTHO: I'll repent afterwards. I fully mean to die in the arena: I'll die a martyr and go to heaven; but not this time, not now, not until my nerves are better.

Besides, I'm too young: I want to have just one more good time. [*The gladiators laugh at him.*] Oh, will no one tell me where the altar is? [*He dashes into the passage and vanishes.*]

ANDROCLES [*to the Editor, pointing after Spintho*]: Brother: I can't do that, not even to oblige you. Don't ask me.

THE EDITOR: Well, if you're determined to die, I can't help you. But I wouldn't be put off by a swine like that.

FERROVIUS: Peace, peace: tempt him not. Get thee behind him, Satan.

THE EDITOR [*flushing with rage*]: For two pins I'd take a turn in the arena myself today, and pay you out for daring to talk to me like that.

*Ferrovius springs forward.*

LAVINIA [*rising quickly and interposing*]: Brother, brother: you forget.

FERROVIUS [*curbing himself by a mighty effort*]: Oh, my temper, my wicked temper! [*To the Editor, as Lavinia sits down again, reassured*] Forgive me, brother. My heart was full of wrath: I should have been thinking of your dear precious soul.

THE EDITOR: Yah! [*He turns his back on Ferrovius contemptuously, and goes back to his seat.*]

FERROVIUS [*continuing*]: And I forgot it all: I thought of nothing but offering to fight you with one hand tied behind me.

THE EDITOR [*turning pugnaciously*]: What!

FERROVIUS [*on the border line between zeal and ferocity*]: Oh, dont give way to pride and wrath, brother. I could do it so easily. I could —

*They are separated by the Menagerie Keeper, who rushes in from the passage, furious.*

THE KEEPER: Heres a nice business! Who let that Christian out of here down to the dens when we were changing the lion into the cage next the arena?

THE EDITOR: Nobody let him. He let himself.

THE KEEPER: Well, the lion's ate him.

*Consternation. The Christians rise, greatly agitated. The gladiators sit callously, but are highly amused. All speak or cry out or laugh at once. Tumult.*

LAVINIA: Oh, poor wretch! FERROVIUS. The apostate has perished. Praise be to God's justice! ANDROCLES. The poor beast was starving. It couldnt help itself.

THE CHRISTIANS. What! Ate him! How frightful! How terrible! Without a moment to repent! God be merciful to him, a sinner! Oh, I cant bear to think of it! In the midst of his sin! Horrible, horrible! THE EDITOR. Serve the rotter right! THE GLADIATORS. Just walked into it, he did. He's martyred all right enough. Good old lion! Old Jock doesn't like that: look at his face. Devil a better! The Emperor will laugh when he hears of it. I cant help smiling. Ha ha ha! ! ! !

THE KEEPER: Now his appetite's taken off, he wont as much as look at another Christian for a week.

ANDROCLES: Couldnt you have saved him, brother?

THE KEEPER: Saved him! Saved him from a lion that I'd just got mad with hunger! a wild one that came out of the forest not four weeks ago! He bolted him before you could say Balbus.

LAVINIA [*sitting down again*]: Poor Spintho! And it wont even count as martyrdom!

THE KEEPER: Serve him right! What call had he to walk down the throat of one of my lions before he was asked?

ANDROCLES: Perhaps the lion wont eat me now.

THE KEEPER: Yes: thats just like a Christian: think only of yourself! What am I to do? What am I to say to the Emperor when he sees one of my lions coming into the arena half asleep?

THE EDITOR: Say nothing. Give your old lion some bitters and a morsel of fried fish to wake up his appetite. [*Laughter.*]

THE KEEPER: Yes: it's easy for you to talk; but —

THE EDITOR [*scrambling to his feet*]: Sh! Attention there! The Emperor. [*The Keeper bolts precipitately into the passage. The gladiators rise smartly and form into line.*]

*The Emperor enters on the Christians' side, conversing with Metellus, and followed by his suite.*

THE GLADIATORS: Hail, Caesar! those about to die salute thee.

CAESAR: Good morrow, friends.

*Metellus shakes hands with the Editor, who accepts his condescension with bluff respect.*

LAVINIA: Blessing, Caesar, and forgiveness!

CAESAR [*turning in some surprise at the salutation*]: There is no forgiveness for Christianity.

LAVINIA: I did not mean that, Caesar. I mean that we forgive you.

METELLUS: An inconceivable liberty! Do you not know, woman, that the Emperor can do no wrong and therefore cannot be forgiven?

LAVINIA: I expect the Emperor knows better. Anyhow, we forgive him.

THE CHRISTIANS: Amen!

CAESAR: Metellus: you see now the disadvantage of too much severity. These people have no hope; therefore they have nothing to restrain them from saying what they like to me. They are almost as impertinent as the gladiators. Which is the Greek sorcerer?

ANDROCLES [*humbly touching his forelock*]: Me, your Worship.

CAESAR: My Worship! Good! A new title. Well: what miracles can you perform?

ANDROCLES: I can cure warts by rubbing them with my tailor's chalk; and I can live with my wife without beating her.

CAESAR: Is that all?

ANDROCLES: You dont know her, Caesar, or you wouldnt say that.

CAESAR: Ah, well, my friend, we shall no doubt contrive a happy release for you. Which is Ferrovius?

FERROVIUS: I am he.

CAESAR: They tell me you can fight.

FERROVIUS: It is easy to fight. *I can die, Caesar.*

CAESAR: That is still easier, is it not?

FERROVIUS: Not to me, Caesar. Death comes hard to my flesh; and fighting comes very easily to my spirit [*beating his breast and lamenting*]. Oh, sinner that I am! [*He throws himself down on the steps, deeply discouraged.*]

CAESAR: Metellus: I should like to have this man in the Pretorian Guard.

METELLUS: *I should not, Caesar. He looks a spoilsport. There are men in whose presence it is impossible to have any fun: men who are a sort of walking conscience. He would make us all uncomfortable.*

CAESAR: For that reason, perhaps, it might be as well to have him. An Emperor can hardly have too many consciences. [*To Ferrovius*] Listen, Ferrovius. [*Ferrovius shakes his head and will not look up.*] You and your friends shall not be outnumbered today in the arena. You shall have arms; and there will be no more than one gladiator to each Christian. If you come out of the arena alive, I will consider favorably any request of yours, and give you a place in

the Pretorian Guard. Even if the request be that no questions be asked about your faith I shall perhaps not refuse it.

FERROVIUS: I will not fight. I will die. Better stand with the archangels than with the Pretorian Guard.

CAESAR: I cannot believe that the archangels — whoever they may be — would not prefer to be recruited from the Pretorian Guard. However, as you please. Come: let us see the show.

*As the Court ascends the steps, Secutor and Retiarius return from the arena through the passage: Secutor covered with dust and very angry: Retiarius grinning.*

SECUTOR: Ha, the Emperor. Now we shall see. Caesar: I ask you whether it is fair for the Retiarius, instead of making a fair throw of his net at me, to swish it along the ground and throw the dust in my eyes, and then catch me when I'm blinded. If the vestals had not turned up their thumbs I should have been a dead man.

CAESAR [*halting on the stair*]: There is nothing in the rules against it.

SECUTOR [*indignantly*]: Caesar: is it a dirty trick or is it not?

CAESAR: It is a dusty one, my friend. [*Obsequious laughter.*] Be on your guard next time.

SECUTOR: Let him be on his guard. Next time I'll throw my sword at his heels and strangle him with his own net before he can hop off. [*To the Retiarius*]

You see if I dont. [*He goes out past the gladiators, sulky and furious.*]

CAESAR [*to the chuckling Retiarius*]: These tricks are not wise, my friend. The audience likes to see a dead man in all his beauty and splendor. If you smudge his face and spoil his armor they will shew their displeasure by not letting you kill him. And when your turn comes, they will remember it against you and turn their thumbs down.

RETIARIUS: Perhaps that is why I did it, Caesar. He bet me ten sesterces that he would vanquish me. If I had had to kill him I should not have had the money.

CAESAR [*indulgent, laughing*]: You rogues: there is no end to your tricks. I'll dismiss you all and have elephants to fight. They fight fairly. [*He goes up to his box, and knocks at it. It is opened from within by the Captain, who stands as on parade to let him pass.*]

*The Call Boy comes from the passage, followed by three attendants carrying respectively a bundle of swords, some helmets, and some breastplates and pieces of armor which they throw down in a heap.*

THE CALL BOY: By your leave, Caesar. Number eleven! Gladiators and Christians!

*Ferrovius springs up, ready for martyrdom. The other Christians take the summons as best they can, some joyful and brave, some patient and dignified, some tearful and helpless, some embracing one another with emotion. The Call Boy goes back into the passage.*



CAESAR [*turning at the door of the box*]: The hour has come, Ferrovius. I shall go into my box and see you killed, since you scorn the Pretorian Guard. [*He goes into the box. The Captain shuts the door, remaining inside with the Emperor. Metellus and the rest of the suite disperse to their seats. The Christians, led by Ferrovius, move towards the passage.*]

LAVINIA [*to Ferrovius*]: Farewell.

THE EDITOR: Steady there. You Christians have got to fight. Here! arm yourselves.

FERROVIUS [*picking up a sword*]: I'll die sword in hand to shew people that I could fight if it were my Master's will, and that I could kill the man who kills me if I chose.

THE EDITOR: Put on that armor.

FERROVIUS: No armor.

THE EDITOR [*bullying him*]: Do what youre told. Put on that armor.

FERROVIUS [*gripping the sword and looking dangerous*]: I said, No armor.

THE EDITOR: And what am I to say when I am accused of sending a naked man in to fight my men in armor?

FERROVIUS: Say your prayers, brother; and have no fear of the princes of this world.

THE EDITOR: Tsha! You obstinate fool! [*He bites his lips irresolutely, not knowing exactly what to do.*]

ANDROCLES [*to Ferrovius*]: Farewell, brother, till we meet in the sweet by-and-by.

THE EDITOR [*to Androcles*]: You are going too. Take a sword there; and put on any armor you can find to fit you.

ANDROCLES: No, really: I cant fight: I never could: I cant bring myself to dislike anyone enough. I'm to be thrown to the lions with the lady.

THE EDITOR: Then get out of the way and hold your noise. [*Androcles steps aside with cheerful docility.*] Now then! Are you all ready there?

*A trumpet is heard from the arena.*

FERROVIUS [*starting convulsively*]: Heaven give me strength!

THE EDITOR: Aha! That frightens you, does it?

FERROVIUS: Man: there is no terror like the terror of that sound to me. When I hear a trumpet or a drum or the clash of steel or the hum of the catapult as the great stone flies, fire runs through my veins: I feel my blood surge up hot behind my eyes: I must charge: I must strike: I must conquer: Caesar himself will not be safe in his imperial seat if once that spirit gets loose in me. Oh, brothers, pray! exhort me! remind me that if I raise my sword my honor falls and my Master is crucified afresh.

ANDROCLES: Just keep thinking how cruelly you might hurt the poor gladiators.

FERROVIUS: It does not hurt a man to kill him.

LAVINIA: Nothing but faith can save you.

FERROVIUS: Faith! Which faith? There are two faiths. There is our faith. And

there is the warrior's faith, the faith in fighting, the faith that sees God in the sword. How if that faith should overwhelm me?

LAVINIA: You will find your real faith in the hour of trial.

FERROVIUS: That is what I fear. I know that I am a fighter. How can I feel sure that I am a Christian?

ANDROCLES: Throw away the sword, brother.

FERROVIUS: I cannot. It cleaves to my hand. I could as easily throw a woman I love from my arms. [*Starting*] Who spoke that blasphemy? Not I.

LAVINIA: I cant help you, friend. I cant tell you not to save your own life. Something wilful in me wants to see you fight your way into heaven.

FERROVIUS: Ha!

ANDROCLES: But if you are going to give up our faith, brother, why not do it without hurting anybody? Dont fight them. Burn the incense.

FERROVIUS: Burn the incense! Never.

LAVINIA: That is only pride, Ferrovius.

FERROVIUS: Only pride! What is nobler than pride? [*Conscience stricken*] Oh, I'm steeped in sin. I'm proud of my pride.

LAVINIA: They say we Christians are the proudest devils on earth — that only the weak are meek. Oh, I am worse than you. I ought to send you to death; and I am tempting you.

ANDROCLES: Brother, brother: let them rage and kill: let us be brave and suffer. You must go as a lamb to the slaughter.

FERROVIUS: Aye, aye: that is right. Not as a lamb is slain by the butcher; but as a butcher might let himself be slain by a [*looking at the Editor*] by a silly ram whose head he could fetch off in one twist.

*Before the Editor can retort, the Call Boy rushes up through the passage, and the Captain comes from the Emperor's box and descends the steps.*

THE CALL BOY: In with you: into the arena. The stage is waiting.

THE CAPTAIN: The Emperor is waiting. [*To the Editor*] What are you dreaming of, man? Send your men in at once.

THE EDITOR: Yes, sir: it's these Christians hanging back.

FERROVIUS [*in a voice of thunder*]: Liar!

THE EDITOR [*not heeding him*]: March. [*The gladiators told off to fight with the Christians march down the passage.*] Follow up there, you.

THE CHRISTIAN MEN AND WOMEN [*as they part*]: Be steadfast, brother. Farewell. Hold up the faith, brother. Farewell. Go to glory, dearest. Farewell. Remember: we are praying for you. Farewell. Be strong, brother. Farewell. Dont forget that the divine love and our love surround you. Farewell. Nothing can hurt you: remember that, brother. Farewell. Eternal glory, dearest. Farewell.

THE EDITOR [*out of patience*]: Shove them in, there.

*The remaining gladiators and the Call Boy make a movement towards them.*

FERROVIUS [*interposing*]: Touch them, dogs; and we die here, and cheat the

heathen of their spectacle. [*To his fellow Christians*] Brothers: the great moment has come. That passage is your hill to Calvary. Mount it bravely, but meekly; and remember! not a word of reproach, not a blow nor a struggle. Go. [*They go out through the passage. He turns to Lavinia.*] Farewell.

LAVINIA: You forget: I must follow before you are cold.

FERROVIUS: It is true. Do not envy me because I pass before you to glory. [*He goes through the passage.*]

THE EDITOR [*to the Call Boy*]: Sickening work, this. Why cant they all be thrown to the lions? It's not a man's job. [*He throws himself moodily into his chair.*]

*The remaining gladiators go back to their former places indifferently. The Call Boy shrugs his shoulders and squats down at the entrance to the passage, near the Editor.*

*Lavinia and the Christian women sit down again, wrung with grief, some weeping silently, some praying, some calm and steadfast. Androcles sits down at Lavinia's feet. The Captain stands on the stairs, watching her curiously.*

ANDROCLES: I'm glad I havnt to fight. That would really be an awful martyrdom. I am lucky.

LAVINIA [*looking at him with a pang of remorse*]: Androcles: burn the incense: youll be forgiven. Let my death atone for both. I feel as if I were killing you.

ANDROCLES: Dont think of me, sister. Think of yourself. That will keep your heart up.

*The Captain laughs sardonically.*

LAVINIA [*startled: she had forgotten his presence*]: Are you there, handsome Captain? Have you come to see me die?

THE CAPTAIN [*coming to her side*]: I am on duty with the Emperor, Lavinia.

LAVINIA: Is it part of your duty to laugh at us?

THE CAPTAIN: No: that is part of my private pleasure. Your friend here is a humorist. I laughed at his telling you to think of yourself to keep up your heart. I say, think of yourself and burn the incense.

LAVINIA: He is not a humorist: he was right. You ought to know that, Captain: you have been face to face with death.

THE CAPTAIN: Not with certain death, Lavinia. Only death in battle, which spares more men than death in bed. What you are facing is certain death. You have nothing left now but your faith in this craze of yours: this Christianity. Are your Christian fairy stories any truer than our stories about Jupiter and Diana, in which, I may tell you, I believe no more than the Emperor does, or any educated man in Rome?

LAVINIA: Captain: all that seems nothing to me now. I'll not say that death is a terrible thing; but I will say that it is so real a thing that when it comes close, all the imaginary things — all the stories, as you call them — fade into mere dreams beside that inexorable reality. I know now that I am not dying for

stories or dreams. Did you hear of the dreadful thing that happened here while we were waiting?

THE CAPTAIN: I heard that one of your fellows bolted, and ran right into the jaws of the lion. I laughed. I still laugh.

LAVINIA: Then you dont understand what that meant?

THE CAPTAIN: It meant that the lion had a cur for his breakfast.

LAVINIA: It meant more than that, Captain. It meant that a man cannot die for a story and a dream. None of us believed the stories and the dreams more devoutly than poor Spintho; but he could not face the great reality. What he would have called my faith has been oozing away minute by minute whilst Ive been sitting here, with death coming nearer and nearer, with reality becoming realler and realler, with stories and dreams fading away into nothing.

THE CAPTAIN: Are you then going to die for nothing?

LAVINIA: Yes: that is the wonderful thing. It is since all the stories and dreams have gone that I have now no doubt at all that I must die for something greater than dreams or stories.

THE CAPTAIN: But for what?

LAVINIA: I dont know. If it were for anything small enough to know, it would be too small to die for. I think I'm going to die for God. Nothing else is real enough to die for.

THE CAPTAIN: What is God?

LAVINIA: When we know that, Captain, we shall be gods ourselves.

THE CAPTAIN: Lavinia: come down to earth. Burn the incense and marry me.

LAVINIA: Handsome Captain; would you marry me if I hauled down the flag in the day of battle and burnt the incense? Sons take after their mothers, you know. Do you want your son to be a coward?

THE CAPTAIN [*strongly moved*]: By great Diana, I think I would strangle you if you gave in now.

LAVINIA [*putting her hand on the head of Androcles*]: The hand of God is on us three, Captain.

THE CAPTAIN: What nonsense it all is! And what a monstrous thing that you should die for such nonsense, and that I should look on helplessly when my whole soul cries out against it! Die then if you must; but at least I can cut the Emperor's throat and then my own when I see your blood.

*The Emperor throws open the door of his box angrily, and appears in wrath on the threshold. The Editor, the Call Boy, and the gladiators spring to their feet.*

THE EMPEROR: The Christians will not fight; and your curs cannot get their blood up to attack them. It's all that fellow with the blazing eyes. Send for the whip. [*The Call Boy rushes out on the east side for the whip.*] If that will not move them, bring the hot irons. The man is like a mountain. [*He returns angrily into the box and slams the door.*]

*The Call Boy returns with a man in a hideous Etruscan mask, carrying a whip. They both rush down the passage into the arena.*

LAVINIA [*rising*]: Oh, that is unworthy. Can they not kill him without dishonoring him?

ANDROCLES [*scrambling to his feet and running into the middle of the space between the staircase*]: It's dreadful. Now *I* want to fight. I can't bear the sight of a whip. The only time I ever hit a man was when he lashed an old horse with a whip. It was terrible: I danced on his face when he was on the ground. He mustn't strike Ferrovius: I'll go into the arena and kill him first. [*He makes a wild dash into the passage. As he does so a great clamor is heard from the arena, ending in wild applause. The gladiators listen and look inquiringly at one another.*]

THE EDITOR: Whats up now?

LAVINIA [*to the Captain*]: What has happened, do you think?

THE CAPTAIN: What can happen? They are killing them, I suppose.

ANDROCLES [*running in through the passage, screaming with horror and hiding his eyes*]!!!

LAVINIA: Androcles, Androcles: whats the matter?

ANDROCLES: Oh don't ask me, don't ask me. Something too dreadful. Oh! [*He crouches by her and hides his face in her robe, sobbing.*]

THE CALL BOY [*rushing through from the passage as before*]: Ropes and hooks there! Ropes and hooks!

THE EDITOR: Well, need you excite yourself about it? [*Another burst of applause.*]  
*Two slaves in Etruscan masks, with ropes and drag hooks, hurry in.*

ONE OF THE SLAVES: How many dead?

THE CALL BOY: Six. [*The slave blows a whistle twice; and four more masked slaves rush through into the arena with the same apparatus.*] And the basket. Bring the baskets. [*The slave whistles three times, and runs through the passage with his companion.*]

THE CAPTAIN: Who are the baskets for?

THE CALL BOY: For the whip. He's in pieces. They're all in pieces, more or less.  
[*Lavinia hides her face.*]

*Two more masked slaves come in with a basket and follow the others into the arena, as the Call Boy turns to the gladiators and exclaims, exhausted — Boys: he's killed the lot.*

THE EMPEROR [*again bursting from his box, this time in an ecstasy of delight*]: Where is he? Magnificent! He shall have a laurel crown.

*Ferrovius, madly waving his bloodstained sword, rushes through the passage in despair, followed by his co-religionists, and by the menagerie keeper, who goes to the gladiators. The gladiators draw their swords nervously.*

FERROVIUS: Lost! lost for ever! I have betrayed my Master. Cut off this right hand: it has offended. Ye have swords, my brethren: strike.

LAVINIA: No, no. What have you done, Ferrovius?

FERROVIUS: I know not; but there was blood behind my eyes; and theres blood on my sword. What does that mean?

THE EMPEROR [*enthusiastically, on the landing outside his box*]: What does it mean? It means that you are the greatest man in Rome. It means that you shall have a laurel crown of gold. Superb fighter: I could almost yield you my throne. It is a record for my reign: I shall live in history. Once, in Domitian's time, a Gaul slew three men in the arena and gained his freedom. But when before has one naked man slain six armed men of the bravest and best? The persecution shall cease: If Christians can fight like this, I shall have none but Christians to fight for me. [*To the Gladiators*] You are ordered to become Christians, you there: do you hear?

RETIARIUS: It is all one to us, Caesar. Had I been there with my net, the story would have been different.

THE CAPTAIN [*suddenly seizing Lavinia by the wrist and dragging her up the steps to the Emperor*]: Caesar: this woman is the sister of Ferrovius. If she is thrown to the lions he will fret. He will lose weight; get out of condition.

THE EMPEROR: The lions? Nonsense! [*To Lavinia*] Madam: I am proud to have the honor of making your acquaintance. Your brother is the glory of Rome.

LAVINIA: But my friends here. Must they die?

THE EMPEROR: Die! Certainly not. There has never been the slightest idea of harming them. Ladies and gentlemen: you are all free. Pray go into the front of the house and enjoy the spectacle to which your brother has so splendidly contributed. Captain: oblige me by conducting them to the seats reserved for my personal friends.

THE MENAGERIE KEEPER: Caesar: I must have one Christian for the lion. The people have been promised it; and they will tear the decorations to bits if they are disappointed.

THE EMPEROR: True, true: we must have somebody for the new lion.

FERROVIUS: Throw me to him. Let the apostate perish.

THE EMPEROR: No, no: you would tear him in pieces, my friend; and we cannot afford to throw away lions as if they were mere slaves. But we must have somebody. This is really extremely awkward.

THE MENAGERIE KEEPER: Why not that little Greek chap? He's not a Christian: he's a sorcerer.

THE EMPEROR: The very thing: he will do very well.

THE CALL BOY [*issuing from the passage*]: Number twelve. The Christian for the new lion.

ANDROCLES [*rising, and pulling himself sadly together*]: Well, it was to be, after all.

LAVINIA: I'll go in his place, Caesar. Ask the Captain whether they do not like best to see a woman torn to pieces. He told me so yesterday.

THE EMPEROR: There is something in that: there is certainly something in that — if only I could feel sure that your brother would not fret.

ANDROCLES: No: I should never have another happy hour. No: on the faith of a Christian and the honor of a tailor, I accept the lot that has fallen on me. If my wife turns up, give her my love and say that my wish was that she should be happy with her next, poor fellow! Caesar: go to your box and see how a tailor can die. Make way for number twelve there. [*He marches out along the passage.*]

*The vast audience in the amphitheatre now sees the Emperor re-enter his box and take his place as Androcles, desperately frightened, but still marching with piteous devotion, emerges from the other end of the passage, and finds himself at the focus of thousands of eager eyes. The lion's cage, with a heavy portcullis grating, is on his left. The Emperor gives a signal. A gong sounds. Androcles shivers at the sound; then falls on his knees and prays. The grating rises with a clash. The lion bounds into the arena. He rushes round frisking in his freedom. He sees Androcles. He stops; rises stiffly by straightening his legs; stretches out his nose forward and his tail in a horizontal line behind, like a pointer, and utters an appalling roar. Androcles crouches and hides his face in his hands. The lion gathers himself for a spring, swishing his tail to and fro through the dust in an ecstasy of anticipation. Androcles throws up his hands in supplication to heaven. The lion checks at the sight of Androcles's face. He then steals towards him; smells him, arches his back; purrs like a motor car; finally rubs himself against Androcles, knocking him over. Androcles, supporting himself on his wrists, looks affrightedly at the lion. The lion limps on three paws, holding up the other as if it was wounded. A flash of recognition lights up the face of Androcles. He flaps his hand as if it had a thorn in it, and pretends to pull the thorn out and to hurt himself. The lion nods repeatedly. Androcles holds out his hands to the lion, who gives him both paws, which he shakes with enthusiasm. They embrace rapturously, finally waltz round the arena amid a sudden burst of deafening applause, and out through the passage, the Emperor watching them in breathless astonishment until they disappear, when he rushes from his box and descends the steps in frantic excitement.*

THE EMPEROR: My friends, an incredible! an amazing thing! has happened. I can no longer doubt the truth of Christianity. [*The Christians press to him joyfully.*] This Christian sorcerer — [*With a yell, he breaks off, as he sees Androcles and the lion emerge from the passage, waltzing. He bolts wildly up the steps into his box, and slams the door. All, Christians and gladiators alike, fly for their lives, the gladiators bolting into the arena, the others in all directions. The place is emptied with magical suddenness.*]

ANDROCLES [*naïvely*]: Now I wonder why they all run away from us like that. [*The lion, combining a series of yawns, purrs, and roars, achieves something very like a laugh.*]

THE EMPEROR [*standing on a chair inside his box and looking over the wall*]: Sor-

cerer: I command you to put that lion to death instantly. It is guilty of high treason. Your conduct is most disgra — [*The lion charges at him up the stairs.*] help! [*He disappears. The lion rears against the box; looks over the partition at him; and roars. The Emperor darts out through the door and down to Androcles, pursued by the lion.*]

ANDROCLES: Dont run away, sir: he cant help springing if you run. [*He seizes the Emperor and gets between him and the lion, who stops at once.*] Dont be afraid of him.

THE EMPEROR: I am not afraid of him. [*The lion crouches, growling. The Emperor clutches Androcles.*] Keep between us.

ANDROCLES: Never be afraid of animals, your worship: thats the great secret. He'll be as gentle as a lamb when he knows that you are his friend. Stand quite still; and smile; and let him smell you all over just to reassure him; for, you see, he's afraid of you; and he must examine you thoroughly before he gives you his confidence. [*To the lion*] Come now, Tommy; and speak nicely to the Emperor, the great good Emperor who has power to have all our heads cut off if we dont behave very very respectfully to him.

*The lion utters a fearful roar. The Emperor dashes madly up the steps, across the landing, and down again on the other side, with the lion in hot pursuit. Androcles rushes after the lion; overtakes him as he is descending; and throws himself on his back, trying to use his toes as a brake. Before he can stop him the lion gets hold of the trailing end of the Emperor's robe.*

ANDROCLES: Oh bad wicked Tommy, to chase the Emperor like that! Let go the Emperor's robe at once, sir: wheres your manners? [*The lion growls and worries the robe.*] Dont pull it away from him, your worship. He's only playing. Now I shall be really angry with you, Tommy, if you dont let go. [*The lion growls again.*] I'll tell you what it is, sir: he thinks you and I are not friends.

THE EMPEROR [*trying to undo the clasp of his brooch*]: Friends! You infernal scoundrel [*The lion growls.*] — dont let him go. Curse this brooch! I cant get it loose.

ANDROCLES: We mustnt let him lash himself into a rage. You must shew him that you are my particular friend — if you will have the condescension. [*He seizes the Emperor's hands and shakes them cordially.*] Look, Tommy: the nice Emperor is the dearest friend Andy Wandy has in the whole world: he loves him like a brother.

THE EMPEROR: You little brute, you damned filthy little dog of a Greek tailor: I'll have you burnt alive for daring to touch the divine person of the Emperor. [*The lion growls.*]

ANDROCLES: Oh dont talk like that, sir. He understands every word you say: all animals do: they take it from the tone of your voice. [*The lion growls and lashes his tail.*] I think he's going to spring at your worship. If you wouldnt mind saying something affectionate. [*The lion roars.*]



THE EMPEROR [*shaking Androcles's hand frantically*]: My dearest Mr Androcles, my sweetest friend, my long lost brother, come to my arms. [*He embraces Androcles.*] Oh, what an abominable smell of garlic!

*The lion lets go the robe and rolls over on his back, clasping his forepaws over one another coquettishly above his nose.*

ANDROCLES: There! You see, your worship, a child might play with him now.

See! [*He tickles the lion's belly. The lion wiggles ecstatically.*] Come and pet him.

THE EMPEROR: I must conquer these unkingly terrors. Mind you don't go away from him, though. [*He pats the lion's chest.*]

ANDROCLES: Oh, sir, how few men would have the courage to do that!

THE EMPEROR: Yes; it takes a bit of nerve. Let us have the Court in and frighten them. Is he safe, do you think?

ANDROCLES: Quite safe now, sir.

THE EMPEROR [*majestically*]: What ho, there! All who are within hearing, return without fear. Caesar has tamed the lion. [*All the fugitives steal cautiously in. The menagerie keeper comes from the passage with other keepers armed with iron bars and tridents.*] Take those things away. I have subdued the beast. [*He places his foot on it.*]

FERROVIUS [*timidly approaching the Emperor and looking down with awe on the lion*]: It is strange that I, who fear no man, should fear a lion.

THE CAPTAIN: Every man fears something, Ferrovius.

THE EMPEROR: How about the Pretorian Guard now?

FERROVIUS: In my youth I worshipped Mars, the God of War. I turned from him to serve the Christian god; but today the Christian god forsook me; and Mars overcame me and took back his own. The Christian god is not yet. He will come when Mars and I are dust; but meanwhile I must serve the gods that are, not the God that will be. Until then I accept service in the Guard, Caesar.

THE EMPEROR: Very wisely said. All really sensible men agree that the prudent course is to be neither bigoted in our attachment to the old nor rash and unpractical in keeping an open mind for the new, but to make the best of both dispensations.

THE CAPTAIN: What do you say, Lavinia? Will you too be prudent?

LAVINIA [*on the stairs*]: No: I'll strive for the coming of the God who is not yet.

THE CAPTAIN: May I come and argue with you occasionally?

LAVINIA: Yes, handsome Captain: you may. [*He kisses her hand.*]

THE EMPEROR: And now, my friends, though I do not, as you see, fear this lion, yet the strain of his presence is considerable; for none of us can feel quite sure what he will do next.

THE MENAGERIE KEEPER: Caesar: give us this Greek sorcerer to be a slave in the menagerie. He has a way with the beasts.

ANDROCLES [*distressed*]: Not if they are in cages. They should not be kept in cages. They must be all let out.

THE EMPEROR: I give this sorcerer to be a slave to the first man who lays hands on him. [*The menagerie keepers and the gladiators rush for Androcles. The lion starts up and faces them. They surge back.*] You see how magnanimous we Romans are, Androcles. We suffer you to go in peace.

ANDROCLES: I thank your worship. I thank you all, ladies and gentlemen. Come, Tommy. Whilst we stand together, no cage for you: no slavery for me. [*He goes out with the lion, everybody crowding away to give him as wide a berth as possible.*]

#### QUESTIONS

1. What does the Prologue contribute to the plot, characterization, or theme? Which speech is a masterpiece of condensed characterization of Megaera?
2. What is the reaction of the Christian prisoners when ordered to change the words of "Onward Christian Soldiers"? What is the Captain's explanation of the term "persecution"?
3. List the varied motives which tempt each Christian to sacrifice to the gods. Which characters succumb? Which remain faithful? Are any of the pagans won over to Christianity?
4. Explain the term "muscular Christianity" in connection with one of these characters. Can you think of any other examples of "muscular Christianity" in history or literature?
5. How does Lavinia persuade the Captain that she should be martyred instead of marrying him? What is Androcles's parting message to his wife?
6. How does Androcles happen to be the only Christian left at the end to be martyred? In what ways did Shaw prepare for the happy ending earlier in the play?

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION X

- ① What are some differences between comedy and tragedy? Base your answer on a study of O'Neill and Shaw, and any ideas you already have. Is *An Enemy of the People* a comedy or a tragedy? Why?
- ② Compare the humor in Shaw and Ibsen. Find stage directions which provide for humorous "business." Which character in each play gets the most laughs? What did you consider the funniest scene in each play?
- ③ Compare and contrast: Petra and Lavinia; Aslaksen and Spintho; the Roman Captain and Captain Horster; Androcles and Dr. Stockmann; Megaera and Mrs. Stockmann; Ferrovius and Yank; Caesar and the Burgomaster.
- ④ If these three plays were running simultaneously on Broadway, which would you rather see? Why? Which would go over best on television? in the movies? over the radio? in a theater in the round? Which part would you rather act if you could?
5. Compare Shaw's and O'Neill's treatment of characters who are facing death. Trace Yank's reactions after his initial terror. Do Shaw's characters show a similar progression? How important is religion in each play? fear?
- ⑥ How do Ibsen and O'Neill say something about all people through the particular people they portray? What do Shaw's characters represent? How important is this extra meaning to each of the plays?

## THEME TOPICS

1. Stationing yourself in the rear of a bus, or in a college corridor or bookstore, jot down bits of conversation overheard. If possible, develop any interesting remark, plot germ, or hint for a character study into a short scene with realistic dialogue. Otherwise, just collect a few pages of real talk.
2. Write a dialogue, like Shaw's discussion between Lavinia and the Captain, presenting two sides of a controversial question.
3. Write a synopsis of a movie, radio, or television play. Try to get the gist of the plot and leave out the trimmings. Or, write a one-hundred word summary of each of the plays in this section.
4. Write a character study of the person in any of these plays whose role you would like to portray. Or, if you don't like to act, write up a character you consider outstanding.
5. Write a description of an original stage setting for a play you might write. Give necessary technical directions (exits, entrances, lighting, etc.), but also give the flavor of the scene. Study material in italics in these plays.
6. Write a skit for production by some campus organization, historical, musical, or topical, on a campus theme; or a fantasy, like Shaw's waltzing lion, about an animal mascot (Navy goat, Republican elephant, etc.).
7. Dramatize a scene from one of the stories in the narrative section. Use author's dialogue wherever possible.

## SECTION

# XI

## CRITICISM

“To *criticize*” means “to judge,” according to the Greek root of the word. Literary criticism, then, is literary judgment, or in plainer English, telling your friends whether you like something you’ve read and why, or why not. When you praise last night’s Western for its “good action shots” and “real surprise ending,” you are indulging in literary criticism. When you yawn and fall asleep over a novel, you are also expressing your literary judgment — that is, if your activities on the previous evening haven’t handicapped the poor writer beyond all justice.

Writing criticism is nothing more nor less than arranging and organizing these literary judgments, with reasons and with some good illustrations from the work you are criticizing, as evidence. To interest the reader, you need to have a strong, definite reaction to the story or play, some lively ideas with which to develop it, and illustrations from the work to convince him that your interpretation is the right one. This, at least, is the simplest, easiest-to-write criticism; we can study its principles more closely in the first selection, Mark Twain’s “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offenses.”

Mark Twain begins by making perfectly clear what he thinks of Cooper’s novels. They could be better: “Cooper’s art has some defects. In one place in *Deerslayer*, and in the restricted space of two thirds of a page, Cooper has scored 114 offenses against literary art out of a possible 115. It breaks the record. . . . There are nineteen rules governing literary art in the domain of romantic fiction — some say twenty-two. In *Deerslayer* Cooper violated eighteen of them.” This statement of main idea at the start — don’t keep the reader wondering whether you consider the story successful or not — is recommended for any article of opinion; and a criticism is simply an expression of opinion about literature.

Twain then proceeds to give his reasons for condemning the novels, and in giving them he refers chiefly to the standard elements of fiction and drama: plot, character, theme, dialogue, setting, etc. He finds that the plot comes to no con-

clusive ending and is implausible (points 1, 2, and 4); that the characters do not come alive but are inconsistent and unsympathetic to the reader (points 3, 6, 10, and 11); and that the dialogue is stilted and frequently serves no purpose in the story (points 5 and 7). These are the fundamental questions on which you must make up your mind before writing your criticism. You liked the story, or you didn't like it — why? why not? Was the plot clever and unusual, or too skimpy, too easily guessed? Were the characters lifelike or just a lot of clotheshorses that you didn't care a hoot about? What about setting — could you see and feel the places? Dialogue — entertaining or dull? Point of the story — trivial or important?

And then, show the reader what you mean. Cooper, Twain argues, has many implausible actions. For example, down a stream with bends every thirty feet sails a scow about one hundred and forty feet long by sixteen feet wide. "This leviathan had been prowling down bends which were but a third as long as itself and scraping between banks where it had only two feet of space to spare on each side. We cannot too much admire this miracle," Twain observes. As for Natty Bumppo's marksmanship, he drives a common wrought nail into a post at a distance of one hundred yards — and Twain inquires: "How far can the best eyes see a common house-fly? A hundred yards? It is quite impossible. Very well, eyes that cannot see a house-fly that is a hundred yards away cannot see an ordinary nail-head at that distance, for the size of the two objects is the same." This is convincing evidence of Cooper's carelessness in his incidents.

Finally, you should, to be fair, consider what your author was aiming at in writing his story or play. Your judgment is given on the grounds that he failed or succeeded in what he tried — don't expect some light verse in the Sunday paper to be great poetry, and don't look for too many laughs in a sermon or moral essay. Twain judges Cooper's novels by the highest standards because they had been praised as masterpieces by other critics; and in his conclusion he indicates what these standards are: "A work of art? It [*The Deerslayer*] has no invention; it has no order, system, sequence, or result; it has no lifelikeness, no thrill, no stir, no seeming of reality; its characters are confusedly drawn and by their acts and words they prove that they are not the sort of people the author claims that they are; its humor is pathetic; its pathos is funny; its conversations are — oh! indescribable; its love-scenes <sup>all of a piece with the</sup> odious; its English a crime against the language." You could apply such standards to a play by Eugene O'Neill, but not to a slight sketch.

A more casual example of criticism is Brooks Atkinson's pleasant review of *Androcles and the Lion*. Atkinson writes almost entirely about the presentation of the religious clash between Christians and Roman Emperor — in other words, about the theme of the play. It's not a bad idea to limit a short review like this to one important element; and Atkinson illustrates the theme very well by quoting a crucial speech of the Captain's, summing it up afterwards in his own

words: "According to Shaw the Christian religion was revolutionary and the emperor's security was endangered by a popular doctrine that did not respect the customs of the state. It was a test of political tolerance." Atkinson agrees with Shaw's interpretation of the religious struggle, he thinks the theme is valid, and so his criticism is favorable. (Notice that he also manages to bring in at least one other element, in a subordinate position — he praises the characterization of the Captain.)

A very different work is Aristotle's renowned *Poetics*, the ancestor of all critical treatises. Whole libraries have been written to explain the *Poetics*, so we can't hope to get very far in a paragraph or so. But Aristotle is not writing judicial criticism of individual authors; he is trying to discover the underlying principles of all imaginative, storytelling literature. He is trying to define, once and for all, what we mean by a *plot* or by *characterization*, and what makes a certain kind of plot or character better than another kind. And what about the *effect* of a story on the hearer? Why do we come out of a movie wiping our eyes or blowing our noses and yet actually enjoying the sadness we have felt? These are fundamental questions for both writer and critic.

Here are a few of Aristotle's leading ideas: a plot is not just any series of actions, but one with a clearly defined "beginning, middle, and end" and, preferably, a "reversal" by which the solution comes out as the opposite of what the characters and audience were expecting. In a tragedy, the hero who suffers should not be a moral paragon but a man whose great and good capacities are wasted through some "error or frailty" which causes his downfall (Macbeth's ambition, for example). Imaginative, storytelling literature is more "universal" (true-to-ordinary-life) than actual happenings, even, because many actual happenings are freaks (like a person falling from a second-floor window and not being injured) whereas the incidents in stories must be plausible to the reader. Aristotle, you can see, is not easy, but he is reasoning about these matters, and if you think hard, you can follow him. For example, in a serious movie in which a sympathetic character suffers, haven't you felt a thrill of horror when you first realized what was going to happen to him or her? and with it, an overwhelming pity? Pity and fear, Aristotle pointed out twenty-three hundred years ago, are the emotions which the writer of tragedy especially appeals to.

Instead of assessing the worth of a writer's work, or tracing the fundamental principles of play and story writing, a critic may make a special attempt to understand his author, as Cowley does in his essay on Faulkner. He begins with Faulkner the man, his personality and background. By vivid writing, he brings before us the "kitchen dialogues between the black cook and her amiable husband . . . Saturday-afternoon gossip in Courthouse Square . . . stories told by men in overalls squatting on their heels while they passed around a fruit-jar full of white corn liquor . . . all the sources familiar to a small-town Mississippi boy." He gives us Faulkner's Mississippi, in real life, and then undertakes to trace

these same people, this same dusty, violent land, in Faulkner's writings. He shows how the same characters, representative of all groups and classes, reappear throughout the stories, how all the writings taken together create a world, a Faulknerian universe of the Deep South.

Then, having made us not only see but also *feel* "that slow trickle of molasses and meal and meat, of shoes and straw hats and overalls, of plowlines and collars and heelbolts and clevises" in a land "opaque, slow, violent," Cowley asks, what is Faulkner's attitude toward the South? What does he *mean* in his novels, his short stories? And he develops the answer he had foreshadowed in his very first paragraph: "his work has become a myth or legend" of the decay and decline of the South after the Civil War. This is a tragedy, in strict Aristotelian terms, because there was much that was good, much that was generous and high-spirited in the old South, much that was better than the cold, industrialized civilization of the North. With what might be called a bit of appreciative criticism — Cowley's intangible personal impressions of Faulkner's works (e.g., his "novels have the quality of being lived") — Cowley concludes: Faulkner "is an epic or bardic poet in prose."

So far the critics in this section have been looking at literature from the outside. Stephen Spender takes the reader behind the scenes of the poet's mind. This is a fascinating essay for anyone who has ever loved to write, just as a book on baseball by a star is thrilling to a boy who plays that game. Even if you have never tried your hand at a stanza celebrating the coming of spring, you will understand better from reading this piece what poetry is all about.

What, exactly, *is* poetry? From the poet's point of view, says Spender, a poem is the end result of his groping his way through the shadowy maze of perceptions, feelings, memories that surround some experience to the very heart and inner meaning of that experience. It is the expression of an insight which is not realized, not comprehended in its fullness, until the poem itself is complete.

Poetry is written only through the most intense concentration: concentration sometimes attained in such eccentric ways as having a few rotten apples concealed in the poet's desk because their odor helps him shut out every other distraction from his mind! Its creation depends upon the poet's achieving this concentration, upon a flash of inspiration (the original idea), upon the perfectness of the poet's memory of sense impressions, upon his gift of song. This is a subtle, modern interpretation — a poem as something made from the raw materials in the poet's mind — to set alongside Aristotle's objective analysis of poetry as something already existing, almost as a part of nature.

In case you are thinking that this criticism business is getting too profound, here comes Don Marquis's archy. archy is a cockroach from Manhattan. His friend, pete the parrot, an elderly bird, we gather, was acquainted with one bill shakespeare. And bill, it appears, was rather unhappy back in Queen Elizabeth's London three hundred years ago:

money money says bill what the hell  
 is money what i want is to be  
 a poet not a business man  
 these damned cheap shows  
 i turn out to keep the  
 theatre running break my heart . . .  
 i want to write sonnets and  
 songs and spenserian stanzas

What kind of criticism is this? Well, it's not a kind to be imitated by the beginner, but it's certainly interesting. It's one poet trying to look into the heart of another. But in the process of creating and humanizing his "bill shakespeare" character, Don Marquis really does give an excellent summary of the popular ingredients in Shakespeare's plays: "that falstaff stuff," "a good ghost," a speech the lead actor "can get his teeth into," and a compliment to the Queen, a reference to "the honest english yeoman," a "heavy villain," a "comic welshman," and "a little pathos along with the dirt." This part is objective criticism, like Mark Twain's. The rest is delightful imaginative writing which at least takes Shakespeare down off his pedestal and shows him as one of us ordinary frustrated mortals . . . "what poor bill wanted was to be a poet"!

Don Marquis should convince you, even if Aristotle has not, that criticizing can be fun. We really think that what *we* like, in books, movies, music, is the best of all, don't we? With the arsenal of Aristotle behind us, we can give some pretty convincing arguments, increase our pleasure by sharing it intelligibly with others, and at the same time, from thinking about the works in question, gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of them.



Mark Twain

## Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses

*Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) waged war on romanticism in fiction, directly by his criticisms and indirectly by his realistic masterpieces, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1875) and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884), about the "flush times" of prosperity and expansion on the Mississippi, of "shanty boats . . . medicine shows, daguerreotypers, minstrel troupes, doctors, thugs, prophets." He blamed the Civil War partly on the Southern love of the works of Sir Walter Scott with their sentimental, chivalric notions. "Real sentiment is a very rare and godlike thing," observed Twain. "You do not know anybody that has it; neither do I."*

*The Pathfinder* and *The Deerslayer* stand at the head of Cooper's novels as artistic creations. There are others of his works which contain parts as perfect as are to be found in these, and scenes even more thrilling. Not one can be compared with either of them as a finished whole.

The defects in both of these tales are comparatively slight. They were pure works of art. — *Prof. Lounsbury.*

The five tales reveal an extraordinary fullness of invention.

. . . One of the very greatest characters in fiction, Natty Bumppo. . . .

The craft of the woodsman, the tricks of the trapper, all the delicate art of the forest, were familiar to Cooper from his youth up. — *Prof. Brander Matthews.*

Cooper is the greatest artist in the domain of romantic fiction yet produced by America. — *Wilkie Collins.*

It seems to me that it was far from right for the Professor of English Literature in Yale, the Professor of English Literature in Columbia, and Wilkie Collins to deliver opinions on Cooper's literature without having read some of it. It would have been much more decorous to keep silent and let persons talk who have read Cooper.

Cooper's art has some defects. In one place in *Deerslayer*, and in the restricted space of two-thirds of a page, Cooper has scored 114 offenses against literary art out of a possible 115. It breaks the record.

There are nineteen rules governing literary art in the domain of romantic fiction — some say twenty-two. In *Deerslayer* Cooper violated eighteen of them. These eighteen require:

1. That a tale shall accomplish something and arrive somewhere. But the *Deerslayer* tale accomplishes nothing and arrives in the air.

2. They require that the episodes of a tale shall be necessary parts of the tale and shall help to develop it. But as the *Deerslayer* tale is not a tale and accomplishes nothing and arrives nowhere, the episodes have no rightful place in the work, since there was nothing for them to develop.

From *In Defence of Harriet Shelley*, by Mark Twain. Copyright 1897 by Harper & Brothers. Copyright 1925 by Clara Gabrilowitsch.

3. They require that the personages in a tale shall be alive, except in the case of corpses, and that always the reader shall be able to tell the corpses from the others. But this detail has often been overlooked in the *Deerslayer* tale.

4. They require that the personages in a tale, both dead and alive, shall exhibit a sufficient excuse for being there. But this detail also has been overlooked in the *Deerslayer* tale.

5. They require that when the personages of a tale deal in conversation, the talk shall sound like human talk, and be talk such as human beings would be likely to talk in the given circumstances, and have a discoverable meaning, also a discoverable purpose and a show of relevancy, and remain in the neighborhood of the subject in hand, and be interesting to the reader, and help out the tale, and stop when the people cannot think of anything more to say. But this requirement has been ignored from the beginning of the *Deerslayer* tale to the end of it.

6. They require that when the author describes the character of a personage in his tale, the conduct and conversation of that personage shall justify said description. But this law gets little or no attention in the *Deerslayer* tale, as Natty Bumppo's case will amply prove.

7. They require that when a personage talks like an illustrated, gilt-edged, tree-calf, hand-tooled, seven-dollar Friendship's Offering in the beginning of a paragraph, he shall not talk like a Negro minstrel in the end of it. But this rule is flung down and danced upon in the *Deerslayer* tale.

8. They require that crass stupidities shall not be played upon the reader as "the craft of the woodsman, the delicate art of the forest," by either the author or the people in the tale. But this rule is persistently violated in the *Deerslayer* tale.

9. They require that the personages of a tale shall confine themselves to possibilities and let miracles alone; or, if they venture a miracle, the author must so plausibly set it forth as to make it look possible and reasonable. But these rules are not respected in the *Deerslayer* tale.

10. They require that the author shall make the reader feel a deep interest in the personages of his tale and in their fate, and that he shall make the reader love the good people in the tale and hate the bad ones. But the reader of the *Deerslayer* tale dislikes the good people in it, is indifferent to the others, and wishes they would all get drowned together.

11. They require that the characters in a tale shall be so clearly defined that the reader can tell beforehand what each will do in a given emergency. But in the *Deerslayer* tale this rule is vacated.

In addition to these large rules there are some little ones. These require that the author shall

12. Say what he is proposing to say, not merely come near it.

13. Use the right word, not its second cousin.

14. Eschew surplusage.

15. Not omit necessary details.
16. Avoid slovenliness of form.
17. Use good grammar.
18. Employ a simple and straightforward style.

Even these seven are coldly and persistently violated in the *Deerslayer* tale.

Cooper's gift in the way of invention was not a rich endowment but such as it was he liked to work it, he was pleased with the effects, and indeed he did some quite sweet things with it. In his little box of stage-properties he kept six or eight cunning devices, tricks, artifices for his savages and woodsmen to deceive and circumvent each other with, and he was never so happy as when he was working these innocent things and seeing them go. A favorite one was to make a moccasined person tread in the tracks of the moccasined enemy, and thus hide his own trail. Cooper wore out barrels and barrels of moccasins in working that trick. Another stage-property that he pulled out of his box pretty frequently was his broken twig. He prized his broken twig above all the rest of his effects, and worked it the hardest. It is a restful chapter in any book of his when somebody doesn't step on a dry twig and alarm all the reds and whites for two hundred yards around. Every time a Cooper person is in peril and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute, he is sure to step on a dry twig. There may be a hundred handier things to step on but that wouldn't satisfy Cooper. Cooper requires him to turn out and find a dry twig, and if he can't do it, go and borrow one. In fact, the Leatherstocking Series ought to have been called the Broken Twig Series.

I am sorry there is not room to put in a few dozen instances of the delicate art of the forest, as practised by Natty Bumppo and some of the other Cooperian experts. Perhaps we may venture two or three samples. Cooper was a sailor, a naval officer; yet he gravely tells us how a vessel, driving toward a lee shore in a gale, is steered for a particular spot by her skipper because he knows of an *undertow* there which will hold her back against the gale and save her. For just pure woodcraft, or sailorcrafter, or whatever it is, isn't that neat? For several years Cooper was daily in the society of artillery and he ought to have noticed that when a cannon-ball strikes the ground it either buries itself or skips a hundred feet or so, skips again a hundred feet or so, and so on till finally it gets tired and rolls. Now in one place he loses some "females" — as he always calls women — in the edge of a wood near a plain at night in a fog, on purpose to give Bumppo a chance to show off the delicate art of the forest before the reader. These mislaid people are hunting for a fort. They hear a cannon-blast, and a cannon-ball presently comes rolling into the wood and stops at their feet. To the females this suggests nothing. The case is very different with the admirable Bumppo. I wish I may never know peace again if he doesn't strike out promptly and *follow the track* of that cannon-ball across the plain through the dense fog and find the fort. Isn't it a daisy? If Cooper had any real knowledge of Nature's ways of

doing things, he had a most delicate art in concealing the fact. For instance: one of his acute Indian experts, Chingachgook (pronounced Chicago, I think), has lost the trail of a person he is tracking through the forest. Apparently that trail is hopelessly lost. Neither you nor I could ever have guessed out the way to find it. It was very different with Chicago. Chicago was not stumped for long. He turned a running stream out of its course and there, in the slush in its old bed, were the person's moccasin tracks. The current did not wash them away, as it would have done in all other like cases — no, even the eternal laws of Nature have to vacate when Cooper wants to put up a delicate job of woodcraft on the reader.

We must be a little wary when Brander Matthews tells us that Cooper's books "reveal an extraordinary fullness of invention." As a rule, I am quite willing to accept Brander Matthews's literary judgments and applaud his lucid and graceful phrasing of them, but that particular statement needs to be taken with a few tons of salt. Bless your heart, Cooper hadn't any more invention than a horse, and I don't mean a high-class horse, either, I mean a clothes-horse. It would be very difficult to find a really clever "situation" in Cooper's books, and still more difficult to find one of any kind which he has failed to render absurd by his handling of it. Look at the episodes of "the caves"; and at the celebrated scuffle between Maqua and those others on the table-land a few days later; and at Hurry Harry's queer water-transit from the castle to the ark; and at Deerslayer's half-hour with his first corpse; and at the quarrel between Hurry Harry and Deerslayer later; and at — But choose for yourself, you can't go amiss.

If Cooper had been an observer his inventive faculty would have worked better: not more interestingly but more rationally, more plausibly. Cooper's proudest creations in the way of "situations" suffer noticeably from the absence of the observer's protecting gift. Cooper's eye was splendidly inaccurate. Cooper seldom saw anything correctly. He saw nearly all things as through a glass eye, darkly. Of course a man who cannot see the commonest little every-day matters accurately is working at a disadvantage when he is constructing a "situation." In the *Deerslayer* tale Cooper has a stream which is fifty feet wide where it flows out of a lake; it presently narrows to twenty as it meanders along for no given reason, and yet when a stream acts like that it ought to be required to explain itself. Fourteen pages later the width of the brook's outlet from the lake has suddenly shrunk thirty feet and become "the narrowest part of the stream." This shrinkage is not accounted for. The stream has bends in it, a sure indication that it has alluvial banks and cuts them, yet these bends are only thirty and fifty feet long. If Cooper had been a nice and punctilious observer he would have noticed that the bends were oftener nine hundred feet long than short of it.

Cooper made the exit of that stream fifty feet wide in the first place for no particular reason; in the second place, he narrowed it to less than twenty to accommodate some Indians. He bends a "sapling" to the form of an arch over

this narrow passage and conceals six Indians in its foliage. They are "laying" for a settler's scow or ark which is coming up the stream on its way to the lake; it is being hauled against the stiff current by a rope whose stationary end is anchored in the lake; its rate of progress cannot be more than a mile an hour. Cooper describes the ark, but pretty obscurely. In the matter of dimensions "it was little more than a modern canal-boat." Let us guess, then, that it was about one hundred and forty feet long. It was of "greater breadth than common." Let us guess, then, that it was about sixteen feet wide. This leviathan had been prowling down bends which were but a third as long as itself and scraping between banks where it had only two feet of space to spare on each side. We cannot too much admire this miracle. A low-roofed log dwelling occupies "two-thirds of the ark's length" — a dwelling ninety feet long and sixteen feet wide, let us say, a kind of vestibule train. The dwelling has two rooms, each forty-five feet long and sixteen feet wide, let us guess. One of them is the bedroom of the Hutter girls, Judith and Hetty; the other is the parlor in the daytime, at night it is papa's bed-chamber. The ark is arriving at the stream's exit now, whose width has been reduced to less than twenty feet to accommodate the Indians — say to eighteen. There is a foot to spare on each side of the boat. Did the Indians notice that there was going to be a tight squeeze there? Did they notice that they could make money by climbing down out of that arched sapling and just stepping aboard when the ark scraped by? No, other Indians would have noticed these things but Cooper's Indians never notice anything. Cooper thinks they are marvelous creatures for noticing but he was almost always in error about his Indians. There was seldom a sane one among them.

The ark is one hundred and forty feet long; the dwelling is ninety feet long. The idea of the Indians is to drop softly and secretly from the arched sapling to the dwelling as the ark creeps along under it at the rate of a mile an hour, and butcher the family. It will take the ark a minute and a half to pass under. It will take the ninety-foot dwelling a minute to pass under. Now, then, what did the six Indians do? It would take you thirty years to guess and even then you would have to give up, I believe. Therefore, I will tell you what the Indians did. Their chief, a person of quite extraordinary intellect for a Cooper Indian, warily watched the canal-boat as it squeezed along under him and when he had got his calculations fined down to exactly the right shade, as he judged, he let go and dropped. And *missed the house!* That is actually what he did. He missed the house and landed in the stern of the scow. It was not much of a fall, yet it knocked him silly. He lay there unconscious. If the house had been ninety-seven feet long he would have made the trip. The fault was Cooper's, not his. The error lay in the construction of the house. Cooper was no architect.

There still remained in the roost five Indians. The boat has passed under and is now out of their reach. Let me explain what the five did — you would not be able to reason it out for yourself. No. 1 jumped for the boat but fell in the water

astern of it. Then No. 2 jumped for the boat but fell in the water still farther astern of it. Then No. 3 jumped for the boat and fell a good way astern of it. Then No. 4 jumped for the boat and fell in the water *away* astern. Then even No. 5 made a jump for the boat — for he was a Cooper Indian. In the matter of intellect, the difference between a Cooper Indian and the Indian that stands in front of the cigar-shop is not spacious. The scow episode is really a sublime burst of invention but it does not thrill, because the inaccuracy of the details throws a sort of air of fictitiousness and general improbability over it. This comes of Cooper's inadequacy as an observer.

The reader will find some examples of Cooper's high talent for inaccurate observation in the account of the shooting-match in *The Pathfinder*.

A common wrought nail was driven lightly into the target, its head having been first touched with paint.

The color of the paint is not stated — an important omission, but Cooper deals freely in important omissions. No, after all, it was not an important omission, for this nail-head is *a hundred yards from* the marksmen and could not be seen by them at that distance, no matter what its color might be. How far can the best eyes see a common house-fly? A hundred yards? It is quite impossible. Very well, eyes that cannot see a house-fly that is a hundred yards away cannot see an ordinary nail-head at that distance, for the size of the two objects is the same. It takes a keen eye to see a fly or a nail-head at fifty yards — one hundred and fifty feet. Can the reader do it?

The nail was lightly driven, its head painted, and game called. Then the Cooper miracles began. The bullet of the first marksman chipped an edge of the nailhead; the next man's bullet drove the nail a little way into the target — and removed all the paint. Haven't the miracles gone far enough now? Not to suit Cooper, for the purpose of this whole scheme is to show off his prodigy, Deerslayer-Hawkeye-Long-Rifle-Leatherstocking-Pathfinder-Bumppo before the ladies.

"Be all ready to clench it, boys!" cried out Pathfinder, stepping into his friend's tracks the instant they were vacant. "Never mind a new nail; I can see that, though the paint is gone, and what I can see I can hit at a hundred yards, though it were only a mosquito's eye. Be ready to clench!"

The rifle cracked, the bullet sped its way, and the head of the nail was buried in the wood, covered by the piece of flattened lead.

There, you see, is a man who could hunt flies with a rifle, and command a ducal salary in a Wild West show today if we had him back with us.

The recorded feat is certainly surprising just as it stands, but it is not surprising enough for Cooper. Cooper adds a touch. He has made Pathfinder do this miracle with another man's rifle; and not only that, but Pathfinder did not have even the advantage of loading it himself. He had everything against him, and

yet he made that impossible shot, and not only made it but did it with absolute confidence, saying, "Be ready to clench." Now a person like that would have undertaken the same feat with a brickbat, and with Cooper to help he would have achieved it, too.

Pathfinder showed off handsomely that day before the ladies. His very first feat was a thing which no Wild West show can touch. He was standing with the group of marksmen, observing — a hundred yards from the target, mind; one Jasper raised his rifle and drove the center of the bull's-eye. Then the Quartermaster fired. The target exhibited no result this time. There was a laugh. "It's a dead miss," said Major Lundie. Pathfinder waited an impressive moment or two, then said in that calm, indifferent, know-it-all way of his, "No, Major, he has covered Jasper's bullet, as will be seen if anyone will take the trouble to examine the target."

Wasn't it remarkable! How *could* he see that little pellet fly through the air and enter that distant bullet-hole? Yet that is what he did, for nothing is impossible to a Cooper person. Did any of those people have any deep-seated doubts about this thing? No; for that would imply sanity and these were all Cooper people.

The respect for Pathfinder's skill and for his *quickness and accuracy of sight* [the italics are mine] was so profound and general, that the instant he made this declaration the spectators began to distrust their own opinions, and a dozen rushed to the target in order to ascertain the fact. There, sure enough, it was found that the Quartermaster's bullet had gone through the hole made by Jasper's, and that, too, so accurately as to require a minute examination to be certain of the circumstance, which, however, was soon clearly established by discovering one bullet over the other in the stump against which the target was placed.

They made a "minute" examination; but never mind, how could they know that there were two bullets in that hole without digging the latest one out? for neither probe nor eyesight could prove the presence of any more than one bullet. Did they dig? No; as we shall see. It is the Pathfinder's turn now; he steps out before the ladies, takes aim, and fires.

But, alas! here is a disappointment, an incredible, an unimaginable disappointment — for the target's aspect is unchanged; there is nothing there but that same old bullet-hole!

"If one dared to hint at such a thing," cried Major Duncan, "I should say that the Pathfinder has also missed the target!"

As nobody had missed it yet, the "also" was not necessary, but never mind about that for the Pathfinder is going to speak.

"No, no, Major," said he, confidently, "that *would* be a risky declaration. I didn't load the piece, and can't say what was in it; but if it was lead, you will find the bullet driving down those of the Quartermaster and Jasper, else is not my name Pathfinder."

A shout from the target announced the truth of this assertion.

Is the miracle sufficient as it stands? Not for Cooper. The Pathfinder speaks again, as he "now slowly advances toward the stage occupied by the females":

"That's not all, boys, that's not all; if you find the target touched at all, I'll own to a miss. The Quartermaster cut the wood, but you'll find no wood cut by that last messenger."

The miracle is at last complete. He knew — doubtless *saw* — at the distance of a hundred yards — that his bullet had passed into the hole *without fraying the edges*. There were now three bullets in that one hole, three bullets embedded processionally in the body of the stump back of the target. Everybody knew this, somehow or other, and yet nobody had dug any of them out to make sure. Cooper is not a close observer but he is interesting. He is certainly always that, no matter what happens. And he is more interesting when he is not noticing what he is about than when he is. This is a considerable merit.

The conversations in the Cooper books have a curious sound in our modern ears. To believe that such talk really ever came out of people's mouths would be to believe that there was a time when time was of no value to a person who thought he had something to say, when it was the custom to spread a two-minute remark out to ten, when a man's mouth was a rolling-mill and busied itself all day long in turning four-foot pigs of thought into thirty-foot bars of conversational railroad iron by attenuation, when subjects were seldom faithfully stuck to but the talk wandered all around and arrived nowhere, when conversations consisted mainly of irrelevancies with here and there a relevancy, a relevancy with an embarrassed look, as not being able to explain how it got there.

Cooper was certainly not a master in the construction of dialogue. Inaccurate observation defeated him here as it defeated him in so many other enterprises of his. He even failed to notice that the man who talks corrupt English six days in the week must and will talk it on the seventh, and can't help himself. In the *Deerslayer* story he lets Deerslayer talk the showiest kind of book-talk sometimes, and at other times the basest of base dialects. For instance, when some one asks him if he has a sweetheart, and if so where she abides, this is his majestic answer:

"She's in the forest — hanging from the boughs of the trees, in a soft rain — in the dew on the open grass — the clouds that float about in the blue heavens — the birds that sing in the woods — the sweet springs where I slake my thirst — and in all the other glorious gifts that come from God's Providence!"

And he preceded that, a little before, with this:

"It consarns me as all things that touches a fri'nd consarns a fri'nd."

And this is another of his remarks:

"If I was Injin born, now, I might tell of this, or carry in the scalp and boast of the expl'ite afore the whole tribe; or if my inimy had only been a bear" — [and so on].



We cannot imagine such a thing as a veteran Scotch Commander-in-Chief comporting himself in the field like a windy melodramatic actor, but Cooper could. On one occasion Alice and Cora were being chased by the French through a fog in the neighborhood of their father's fort:

"*Point de quartier aux coquins!*" cried an eager pursuer, who seemed to direct the operations of the enemy.

"Stand firm and be ready, my gallant 60ths!" suddenly exclaimed a voice above them; "wait to see the enemy; fire low, and sweep the glacis."

"Father! father," exclaimed a piercing cry from out the mist; "it is I! Alice! thy own Elsie! spare, O! save your daughters!"

"Hold!" shouted the former speaker, in the awful tones of parental agony, the sound reaching even to the woods, and rolling back in solemn echo. "'Tis she! God has restored me my children! Throw open the sally-port; to the field, 60ths, to the field! pull not a trigger, lest ye kill my lambs! Drive off these dogs of France with your steel!"

Cooper's word-sense was singularly dull. When a person has a poor ear for music he will flat and sharp right along without knowing it. He keeps near the tune, but it is *not* the tune. When a person has a poor ear for words, the result is a literary flattening and sharpening; you perceive what he is intending to say but you also perceive that he doesn't *say* it. This is Cooper. He was not a word-musician. His ear was satisfied with the *approximate* word. I will furnish some circumstantial evidence in support of this charge. My instances are gathered from half a dozen pages of the tale called *Deerslayer*. He uses "verbal" for "oral"; "precision" for "facility"; "phenomena" for "marvels"; "necessary" for "predetermined"; "unsophisticated" for "primitive"; "preparation" for "expectancy"; "rebuked" for "subdued"; "dependent on" for "resulting from"; "fact" for "condition"; "fact" for "conjecture"; "precaution" for "caution"; "explain" for "determine"; "mortified" for "disappointed"; "meretricious" for "factitious"; "materially" for "considerably"; "decreasing" for "deepening"; "increasing" for "disappearing"; "embedded" for "inclosed"; "treacherous" for "hostile"; "stood" for "stooped"; "softened" for "replaced"; "rejoined" for "remarked"; "situation" for "condition"; "different" for "differing"; "insensible" for "unsentient"; "brevity" for "celerity"; "distrusted" for "suspicious"; "mental imbecility" for "imbecility"; "eyes" for "sight"; "counter-acting" for "opposing"; "funeral obsequies" for "obsequies."

There have been daring people in the world who claimed that Cooper could write English but they are all dead now — all dead but Lounsbury. I don't remember that Lounsbury makes the claim in so many words, still he makes it for he says that *Deerslayer* is a "pure work of art." Pure, in that connection, means faultless — faultless in all details — and language is a detail. If Mr. Lounsbury had only compared Cooper's English with the English which he writes himself — but it is plain that he didn't, and so it is likely that he imagines until this day that Cooper's is as clean and compact as his own. Now I feel sure, deep

down in my heart, that Cooper wrote about the poorest English that exists in our language and that the English of *Deerslayer* is the very worst that even Cooper ever wrote.

I may be mistaken, but it does seem to me that *Deerslayer* is not a work of art in any sense; it does seem to me that it is destitute of every detail that goes to the making of a work of art; in truth, it seems to me that *Deerslayer* is just simply a literary *delirium tremens*.

A work of art? It has no invention; it has no order, system, sequence, or result; it has no lifelikeness, no thrill, no stir, no seeming of reality; its characters are confusedly drawn and by their acts and words they prove that they are not the sort of people the author claims that they are; its humor is pathetic; its pathos is funny; its conversations are — oh! indescribable; its love-scenes odious; its English a crime against the language.

Counting these out, what is left is Art. I think we must all admit that.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Mention some principles of plotting and characterization which Cooper violates.
2. What are the requirements of dialogue in romantic fiction? Which ones does Cooper neglect?
3. Explain "a literary flattening and sharpening."
4. What happens "every time a Cooper person is in peril and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute"?
5. Give an example from Cooper of a miracle which does not meet the requirements of plausibility.
6. If you have read any of Cooper's tales, what defense can you make for him against these criticisms?
7. Evaluate this selection as a humorous essay; as literary criticism.

*Aristotle, Greek philosopher who was first a student then a rival of Plato's, composed his Poetics around 334 B.C. for his students in Athens. Before setting up his own school, the Lyceum, Aristotle had traveled and had been a tutor of Alexander the Great, who is said to have slept with Aristotle's edition of Homer under his pillow. The Poetics was lost shortly after Aristotle's death, in 322; recovered in the first century B.C. and then lost again until its first printing at the time of the Renaissance, 1498. Since then many editions of this most famous of all critical treatises have appeared, and its ideas have influenced modern tragedy from Shakespeare on. A second part of the Poetics, on comedy, was permanently lost in ancient times.*

## 6

Of the poetry which imitates in hexameter verse, and of Comedy, we will speak hereafter. Let us now discuss Tragedy, resuming its formal definition, as resulting from what has been already said.

2. Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions. 3. By "language embellished," I mean language into which rhythm, "harmony," and song enter. By "the several kinds in separate parts," I mean, that some parts are rendered through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song.

4. Now as tragic imitation implies persons acting, it necessarily follows, in the first place, that Spectacular equipment will be a part of Tragedy. Next, Song and Diction, for these are the medium of imitation. By "Diction" I mean the mere metrical arrangement of the words: as for "Song," it is a term whose sense every one understands.

5. Again, Tragedy is the imitation of an action; and an action implies personal agents, who necessarily possess certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought; for it is by these that we qualify actions themselves, and these — thought and character — are the two natural causes from which actions spring, and on actions again all success or failure depends. 6. Hence, the Plot is the imitation of the action: — for by Plot I here mean the arrangement of the incidents. By Character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents. Thought is required wherever a statement is proved, or, it may be, a general truth enunciated. 7. Every Tragedy, therefore, must have six

parts, which parts determine its quality — namely, Plot, Character, Diction, Thought, Spectacle, Song. Two of the parts constitute the medium of imitation, one the manner, and three the objects of imitation. And these complete the list. 8. These elements have been employed, we may say, by the poets to a man; in fact, every play contains Spectacular elements as well as Character, Plot, Diction, Song, and Thought.

9. But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality. 10. Now character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as subsidiary to the actions. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. 11. Again, without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without character. The tragedies of most of our modern poets fail in the rendering of character; and of poets in general this is often true. It is the same in painting; and here lies the difference between Zeuxis and Polygnotus. Polygnotus delineates character well: the style of Zeuxis is devoid of ethical quality. 12. Again, if you string together a set of speeches expressive of character, and well finished in point of diction and thought, you will not produce the essential tragic effect nearly so well as with a play which, however deficient in these respects, yet has a plot and artistically constructed incidents. 13. Besides which, the most powerful elements of emotional interest in Tragedy — Peripeteia or Reversal of the situation, and Recognition scenes — are parts of the plot. 14. A further proof is, that novices in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot. It is the same with almost all the early poets.

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: Character holds the second place. 15. A similar fact is seen in painting. The most beautiful colours, laid on confusedly, will not give as much pleasure as the chalk outline of a portrait. Thus Tragedy is the imitation of an action, and of the agents mainly with a view to the action.

16. Third in order is Thought, — that is, the faculty of saying what is possible and pertinent in given circumstances. In the case of oratory, this is the function of the political art and of the art of rhetoric: and so indeed the older poets make their characters speak the language of civic life; the poets of our time, the language of the rhetoricians.

17. Character is that which reveals moral purpose, showing what kind of things a man chooses or avoids. Speeches, therefore, which do not make this manifest, or in which the speaker does not choose or avoid anything whatever, are not expressive of character. Thought, on the other hand, is found where something is proved to be or not to be, or a general maxim is enunciated.

18. Fourth among the elements enumerated comes Diction; by which I

mean, as has been already said, the expression of the meaning in words; and its essence is the same both in verse and prose.

19. Of the remaining elements Song holds the chief place among the embellishments.

The Spectacle has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and connected least with the art of poetry. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors. Besides, the production of spectacular effects depends more on the art of the stage machinist than on that of the poet.

## 7

These principles being established, let us now discuss the proper structure of the Plot, since this is the first and most important thing in Tragedy.

2. Now, according to our definition, Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete, and whole, and of a certain magnitude; for there may be a whole that is wanting in magnitude. 3. A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles.

4. Again, a beautiful object, whether it be a picture of a living organism or any whole composed of parts, must not only have an orderly arrangement of parts, but must also be of a certain magnitude; for beauty depends on magnitude and order. Hence an exceedingly small picture cannot be beautiful; for the view of it is confused, the object being seen in an almost imperceptible moment of time. Nor, again, can one of vast size be beautiful; for as the eye cannot take it all in at once, the unity and sense of the whole is lost for the spectator; as for instance if there were one a thousand miles long. 5. As, therefore, in the case of animate bodies and organisms a certain magnitude is necessary, and a magnitude which may be easily embraced in one view; so in the plot, a certain length is necessary, and a length which can be easily embraced by the memory. 6. The limit of length in relation to dramatic competition and sensuous presentment is no part of artistic theory. For had it been the rule for a hundred tragedies to compete together, the performance would have been regulated by the water-clock, — as indeed we are told was formerly done. 7. But the limit as fixed by the nature of the drama itself is this: — the greater the length, the more beautiful will the piece be by reason of its size, provided that the whole be perspicuous. And to define the matter roughly, we may say that the proper magnitude is comprised within such limits, that the sequence of events, according to the law

of probability or necessity, will admit of a change from bad fortune to good, or from good fortune to bad.

## 8

Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the unity of the hero. For infinitely various are the incidents in one man's life, which cannot be reduced to unity; and so, too, there are many actions of one man out of which we cannot make one action. 2. Hence the error, as it appears, of all poets who have composed a *Heracleid*, a *Theseid*, or other poems of the kind. They imagine that as Heracles was one man, the story of Heracles must also be a unity. 3. But Homer, as in all else he is of surpassing merit, here too — whether from art or natural genius — seems to have happily discerned the truth. In composing the *Odyssey* he did not include all the adventures of Odysseus — such as his wound on Parnassus, or his feigned madness at the mustering of the host — incidents between which there was no necessary or probable connexion: but he made the *Odyssey*, and likewise the *Iliad*, to centre round an action that in our sense of the word is one. 4. As therefore, in the other imitative arts, the imitation is one when the object imitated is one, so the plot, being an imitation of an action, must imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed. For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference, is not an organic part of the whole.

## 9

It is, moreover, evident from what has been said, that it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen, — what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. 2. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with metre no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. 3. Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. 4. By the universal I mean how a person of a certain type will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of probability or necessity; and it is this universality at which poetry aims in the names she attaches to the personages. The particular is — for example — what Alcibiades did or suffered. 5. In Comedy this is already apparent: for here the poet first constructs the plot on the lines of probability, and then inserts characteristic names; — unlike the lampooners who write about particular individuals. 6. But tragedians still keep to real names, the reason being that what is possible is credible: what has not happened we do not at once feel sure to be possible: but what has happened is manifestly possible: otherwise it would not have happened. 7. Still there are some tragedies in which there are only one or two well known names, the rest

being fictitious. In others, none are well known, — as in Agathon's *Antheus*, where incidents and names alike are fictitious, and yet they give none the less pleasure. 8. We must not, therefore, at all costs keep to the received legends, which are the usual subjects of Tragedy. Indeed, it would be absurd to attempt it; for even subjects that are known are known only to a few, and yet give pleasure to all. 9. It clearly follows that the poet or "maker" should be the maker of plots rather than of verses; since he is a poet because he imitates, and what he imitates are actions. And even if he chances to take an historical subject, he is none the less a poet; for there is no reason why some events that have actually happened should not conform to the law of the probable and possible, and in virtue of that quality in them he is their poet or maker.

10. Of all plots and actions the epeisodic are the worst. I call a plot "epeisodic" in which the episodes or acts succeed one another without probable or necessary sequence. Bad poets compose such pieces by their own fault, good poets, to please the players; for, as they write show pieces for competition, they stretch the plot beyond its capacity, and are often forced to break the natural continuity.

11. But again, Tragedy is an imitation not only of a complete action, but of events inspiring fear or pity. Such an effect is best produced when the events come on us by surprise; and the effect is heightened when, at the same time, they follow as cause and effect. 12. The tragic wonder will then be greater than if they happened of themselves or by accident; for even coincidences are most striking when they have an air of design. We may instance the statue of *Mityls* at Argos, which fell upon his murderer while he was a spectator at a festival, and killed him. Such events seem not to be due to mere chance. Plots, therefore, constructed on these principles are necessarily the best.

## 10

Plots are either Simple or Complex, for the actions in real life, of which the plots are an imitation, obviously show a similar distinction. 2. An action which is one and continuous in the sense above defined, I call Simple, when the change of fortune takes place without Reversal of the Situation and without Recognition.

A Complex action is one in which the change is accompanied by such Reversal, or by Recognition, or by both. 3. These last should arise from the internal structure of the plot, so that what follows should be the necessary or probable result of the preceding action. It makes all the difference whether any given event is a case of *propter hoc* or *post hoc*.

## 11

Reversal of the Situation is a change by which the action veers round to its opposite, subject always to our rule of probability or necessity. Thus in the *Oedi-*

pus, the messenger comes to cheer Oedipus and free him from his alarms about his mother, but by revealing who he is, he produces the opposite effect. Again in the Lynceus, Lynceus is being led away to his death, and Danaus goes with him, meaning to slay him; but the outcome of the action is, that Danaus is killed and Lynceus saved.

2. Recognition, as the name indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune. The best form of recognition is coincident with a Reversal of the Situation, as in the Oedipus. 3. There are indeed other forms. Even inanimate things of the most trivial kind may sometimes be objects of recognition. Again, we may recognise or discover whether a person has done a thing or not. But the recognition which is most intimately connected with the plot and action is, as we have said, the recognition of persons. 4. This recognition, combined with Reversal, will produce either pity or fear; and actions producing these effects are those which, by our definition, Tragedy represents. Moreover, it is upon such situations that the issues of good or bad fortune will depend. 5. Recognition, then, being between persons, it may happen that one person only is recognised by the other — when the latter is already known — or it may be necessary that the recognition should be on both sides. Thus Iphigenia is revealed to Orestes by the sending of the letter; but another act of recognition is required to make Orestes known to Iphigenia.

6. Two parts, then, of the Plot — Reversal of the Situation and Recognition — turn upon surprises. A third part is the Scene of Suffering. The Scene of Suffering is a destructive or painful action, such as death on the stage, bodily agony, wounds, and the like. . . .

### 13

As the sequel to what has already been said, we must proceed to consider what the poet should aim at, and what he should avoid, in constructing his plots; and by what means the specific effect of Tragedy will be produced.

2. A perfect tragedy should, as we have seen, be arranged not on the simple but on the complex plan. It should, moreover, imitate actions which excite pity and fear, this being the distinctive mark of tragic imitation. It follows plainly, in the first place, that the change of fortune presented must not be the spectacle of a virtuous man brought from prosperity to adversity: for this moves neither pity nor fear; it merely shocks us. Nor, again, that of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity: for nothing can be more alien to the spirit of Tragedy; it possesses no single tragic quality; it neither satisfies the moral sense, nor calls forth pity or fear. Nor, again, should the downfall of the utter villain be exhibited. A plot of this kind would, doubtless, satisfy the moral sense, but it would inspire neither pity nor fear; for pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves. Such an event, therefore, will be



neither pitiful nor terrible. 3. There remains, then, the character between these two extremes, — that of a man who is not eminently good and just, yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice or depravity, but by some error or frailty. He must be one who is highly renowned and prosperous, — a personage like Oedipus, Thyestes, or other illustrious men of such families.

4. A well constructed plot should, therefore, be single in its issue, rather than double as some maintain. The change of fortune should be not from bad to good, but, reversely, from good to bad. It should come about as the result not of vice, but of some great error or frailty, in a character either such as we have described, or better rather than worse. 5. The practice of the stage bears out our view. At first the poets recounted any legend that came in their way. Now, the best tragedies are founded on the story of a few houses, — on the fortunes of Alcmaeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and those others who have done or suffered something terrible. A tragedy, then, to be perfect according to the rules of art should be of this construction. 6. Hence they are in error who censure Euripides just because he follows this principle in his plays, many of which end unhappily. It is, as we have said, the right ending. The best proof is that on the stage and in dramatic competition, such plays, if well worked out, are the most tragic in effect; and Euripides, faulty though he may be in the general management of his subject, yet is felt to be the most tragic of the poets.

7. In the second rank comes the kind of tragedy which some place first. Like the *Odyssey*, it has a double thread of plot, and also an opposite catastrophe for the good and for the bad. It is accounted the best because of the weakness of the spectators; for the poet is guided in what he writes by the wishes of his audience. 8. The pleasure, however, thence derived is not the true tragic pleasure. It is proper rather to Comedy, where those who, in the piece, are the deadliest enemies — like Orestes and Aegisthus — quit the stage as friends at the close, and no one slays or is slain.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Define tragedy in a sentence quoted from Aristotle. What are the six parts of tragedy?
2. What is meant by spectacle? Which is more important, plot or character? Discuss this conclusion and the accompanying comparison to painting from the point of view of contemporary art and literature.
3. Explain "of a certain magnitude." How do the "poet" (playwright) and historian differ? What is the meaning of "universal"?
4. Discuss the effect of surprise in a plot; of cause and effect; of coincidence. What emotions should the tragedian excite?
5. What kind of person should be the hero of a tragedy? Do the heroes of Shakespearean plays conform to these requirements? Do the heroes of contemporary plays (like Yank in O'Neill's *Bound East for Cardiff*)?

Brooks Atkinson

## A Review of Bernard Shaw's "Androcles and the Lion"

*Brooks Atkinson, dramatic critic of the New York Times since 1925, considers the first sentence in a review the most important one. He also thinks that the play critic is "a good deal more temperate and judicial than most experienced theatre-goers" because "being the representative of a large public, he cannot indulge his personal whims freely." Atkinson graduated from Harvard in 1917, and, after army experience followed by journalism, came to the New York Times in 1922 as literary editor. He is an essayist and authority on Thoreau (author of Henry Thoreau, A Cosmic Yankee, 1927), as well as a critic. During World War II he served as foreign correspondent.*

Only the other day Bernard Shaw was making some testy remarks about Christmas that sounded more like Scrooge than a bearded St. Nicholas. A quarter of a century ago they would have irritated the good people of England and America who had about as much as they could stand of Shaw's unsentimentality. For the man who lacks sentiment is constantly treading on the raw nerves of civilizations that are comfortably sedated with all manner of romantic assumptions. But a bit of caustic iconoclasm from the master of British letters is received today with indulgent sentiment. People take their hats off to a man who, by chewing carrots and celery, has lived to be ninety years of age and can still assert his independence. "Pretty good for that old duffer," they are now likely to say when Shaw dissociates himself from the great religious and solstitial festival of the year. By shamelessly outliving most of his contemporaries and yet preserving his character intact, Shaw now finds himself sitting a little uncomfortably on a pedestal after knocking gods off pedestals all his life.

Let's not piously assume that his present eminence comes from a general recognition of his genius as a writer. To most people, who can take their literature or let it alone, Shaw's lightning personality has always been more attractive than his books and plays. His works are hardly more than isolated flashes of the genius that has been striking recklessly in hundreds of directions for seventy-one years. In 1875, at nineteen, he announced in a Dublin journal that the success of Moody and Sankey was not religious but emanated from notoriety and excitement and that the effect of the evangelists on individuals was "to make them highly objectionable members of society." Or, at any rate, that is how Hesketh Pearson reports Shaw's first letter to the press, which turned out to be typical of his career.

As it happens, the subject of Shaw is very pleasant just now, not because he has just been snapping at Santa Claus, but because his *Androcles and the Lion*

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is the wittiest play in New York at the moment. From every point of view it is the happiest choice the American Repertory Theatre has made. It is not only intelligent but amusing, which is a rare combination in the theatre; and under Margaret Webster's bright-minded direction the repertory players are acting it well. By now possibly the lion is roaring more hideously than he did on the opening night when John Becher underplayed his ferocity. Really, now, the lion must roar the daylights out of the emperor in the last scene. The emperor has to be scared; it would do no harm to scare the audience, also. But that is a minor default in a genuinely humorous performance that knows very well what Shaw's play is about.

Like many of Shaw's plays, *Androcles* is not the sort of thing you would naturally expect from an unsentimental intellectual who has always been at war with the world. It is not a realistic argument, which would be the normal style for a polemist, but a humorous fairy story with a lion as one of its chief characters. "I wrote *Androcles* partly to show Barrie how a play for children should be handled," Shaw said facetiously, no doubt with *Peter Pan* in mind. Since Shaw is a skeptic, scientist and frightful modernist, you might logically expect his study of the New Testament to be scornful of ancient chronicles that contain so much unscientific mysticism. But the Christian characters in *Androcles* are human and triumphant, drawn by an obvious admirer and defender. Shaw is on their side. He wrote *Androcles* in 1912. Granville-Barker produced it in 1913. Apparently some people in London resented it as a blasphemous play. But that was probably because Shaw's style is always irreverent. Even when he is plumping for your side, you cannot be quite sure because he argues your case with a biting difference of manner that establishes his independent rights to the theme. He makes your side his by the ingenuity of his reasoning and the eagerness of his writing. There is no such thing as community property when Shaw is in the house.

Probably *Androcles* seemed blasphemous because Shaw interpreted Rome's persecution of the Christians as political rather than religious. Shaw maintains that the emperor was not opposed to the Christian religion as such but that he could not tolerate a propaganda that seemed to threaten the interests involved in the established law and order. The ideals of Christianity endangered the authority of the state, which would still be the case if Christianity were practiced today. According to *Androcles*, the state required only that the Christians honor the formalities of the official pagan religion. The Captain (incidentally, a brilliantly drawn character, and well played by Richard Waring) bluntly declares that the emperor "does not desire that any prisoner should suffer; nor can any Christian be harmed save through his or her own obstinacy. All that is necessary is to sacrifice to the gods: a simple and convenient ceremony effected by dropping a pinch of incense on the altar, after which the prisoner is at once set free. . . . I suggest that if you cannot burn a morsel of incense as a matter

of conviction, you might at least do so as a matter of good taste, to avoid shocking the religious convictions of your fellow citizens." That is the point of the play. According to Shaw the Christian religion was revolutionary and the emperor's security was endangered by a popular doctrine that did not respect the customs of the state. It was a test of political tolerance.

Shaw's offense thirty years ago was that he studied the life and teachings of Jesus without observing the usual ecclesiastical formalities. Like the characters in the play, he was guilty of bad taste, for he applied to the gospels the same standards and reasoning that he applied to the other books in his library. But the interesting thing is that he emerged from his hard-headed study of the New Testament like a modern disciple. "Modern sociology and biology are steadily bearing Jesus out in his peculiar economics and theology," Shaw wrote to Frank Harris in 1915 when he was working on the monumental preface to the play. In the first paragraph of that preface he declared: "I am ready to admit after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which could have been found by Christ's will if he had undertaken the work of a modern practical statesman." *Androcles* is blasphemous only to people who do not dare to think about Jesus except when they are snugly in church.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What element of *Androcles and the Lion* does Atkinson discuss at greatest length? What other aspects might have been discussed?
2. What is the only criticism Atkinson made of the New York production? What criticism was made of the play when it was first presented? How does Atkinson defend it?
3. What, after a study of the New Testament, did Shaw conclude?

*Malcolm Cowley is a leading critic who has been praised especially for his interpretation of Faulkner's works. After study at Harvard and service in World War I, he lived abroad with the "expatriate" American writers — Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and others — until 1923, later writing Exile's Return (1934), "the most vivacious of all accounts of literary life during the fabulous 1920's." He was a free-lance book reviewer and translator after his return, and later book editor of the New Republic. In addition to his critical works and translations, he has published several volumes of poetry. "The torture of my life is writing," he once remarked.*

I

When the war was over — the other war — William Faulkner went back to Oxford, Mississippi. He had served in the Royal Air Force in 1918. Now he was home again and not at home, or at least not able to accept the postwar world. He was writing poems, most of them worthless, and dozens of immature but violent and effective stories, while at the same time he was brooding over his own situation and the decline of the South. Slowly the brooding thoughts arranged themselves into the whole interconnected pattern that would form the substance of his later novels.

This pattern, which almost all his critics have overlooked, was based on what he saw in Oxford or remembered from his childhood; on scraps of family tradition (the Falkners, as they spelled the name, had played their part in the history of the state); on kitchen dialogues between the black cook and her amiable husband; on Saturday-afternoon gossip in Courthouse Square; on stories told by men in overalls squatting on their heels while they passed around a fruit-jar full of white corn liquor; on all the sources familiar to a small-town Mississippi boy — but the whole of it was elaborated, transformed, given convulsive life by his emotions; until, by the simple intensity of feeling, the figures in it became a little more than human, became heroic or diabolical, became symbols of the old South, of war and reconstruction, of commerce and machinery destroying the standards of the past. There in Oxford, Faulkner performed a labor of imagination that has not been equaled in our time, and a double labor: first, to invent a Mississippi county that was like a mythical kingdom, but was complete and living in all its details; second, to make his story of Yoknapatawpha County stand as a parable or legend of all the Deep South.

For this double task, Faulkner was better equipped by talent and background than he was by schooling. He was born in New Albany, Mississippi, on

September 25, 1897; he was the oldest of four brothers. The family soon moved to Oxford, where he attended the public school, but without being graduated from high school. For a year after the war, he was a student at the University of Mississippi, in Oxford, where veterans could then matriculate without a high-school diploma; but he neglected his classroom work and left without taking a degree. He had less of a formal education than any other good writer of his time, except Hart Crane — less even than Hemingway, who never went to college, but who learned to speak three foreign languages and studied writing in Paris from the best masters. Faulkner taught himself, largely, as he says, by “undirected and uncorrelated reading.” Among the authors either mentioned or echoed in his early stories and poems are Keats, Balzac, Flaubert, Swinburne, Mallarmé, Wilde, Housman, Joyce, Eliot, Sherwood Anderson, and E. E. Cummings, with fainter suggestions of Hemingway (in a fishing scene), Dos Passos (in the spelling of compound words), and Scott Fitzgerald. The poems he wrote in those days were wholly derivative, but his prose from the beginning was a form of poetry; and in spite of the echoes it was always his own. He traveled less than any of his writing contemporaries. After a succession of odd jobs in Oxford, there was a brief period when he lived in New Orleans with Sherwood Anderson and met the literary crowd — he even satirized them in a very bad early novel, *Mosquitoes*; then he went to New York, where for a few unhappy months he clerked in a bookstore; in 1925 he took a long walking trip in Europe without settling on the Left Bank. Except for recent visits to Hollywood, the rest of his life has been spent in the town where he grew up, less than forty miles from his birthplace.

Although Oxford, Mississippi, is the seat of a university, it is even less of a literary center than was Salem, Massachusetts, during Hawthorne's early years as a writer; and Faulkner himself has shown an even greater dislike than Hawthorne for literary society. His novels are the books of a man who broods about literature but doesn't often discuss it with his friends; there is no ease about them, no feeling that they come from a background of taste refined by argument and of opinions held in common. They make me think of a passage from Henry James's little book on Hawthorne:

The best things come, as a general thing, from the talents that are members of a group; every man works better when he has companions working in the same line, and yielding to the stimulus of suggestion, comparison, emulation. Great things of course have been done by solitary workers; but they have usually been done with double the pains they would have cost if they had been produced in more genial circumstances. The solitary worker loses the profit of example and discussion; he is apt to make awkward experiments; he is in the nature of the case more or less of an empiric. The empiric may, as I say, be treated by the world as an expert; but the drawbacks and discomforts of empiricism remain to him, and are in fact increased by the suspicion that is mingled with his gratitude, of a want in the public taste of a sense of the proportion of things.

Like Hawthorne, Faulkner is a solitary worker by choice, and he has done great things not only with double the pains to himself that they might have cost if produced in more genial circumstances, but sometimes also with double the pains to the reader. Two or three of his books as a whole and many of them in part are awkward experiments. All of them are full of overblown words like "imponderable," "immortal," "immutable," and "immemorial" that he would have used with more discretion, or not at all, if he had followed Hemingway's example and served an apprenticeship to an older writer. He is a most uncertain judge of his own work, and he has no reason to believe that the world's judgment of it is any more to be trusted; indeed, there is no American author who would be justified in feeling more suspicion of "a want in the public taste of a sense of the proportion of things." His early novels were overpraised, usually for the wrong reasons; his later and in many ways better novels have been obstinately condemned or simply neglected; and in 1945 all his seventeen books were out of print, with some of them unobtainable in the second-hand bookshops.

Even his warm admirers, of whom there are many — no author has a higher standing among his fellow novelists — have sometimes shown a rather vague idea of what he is trying to do; and Faulkner himself has never explained. He holds a curious attitude toward the public that appears to be lofty indifference (as in the one preface he wrote, for the Modern Library edition of *Sanctuary*), but really comes closer to being a mixture of skittery distrust and pure unconsciousness that the public exists. He doesn't furnish information or correct misstatements about himself (most of the biographical sketches that deal with him are full of preposterous errors). He doesn't care which way his name is spelled in the records, with or without the "u" — "Either way suits me," he said. Once he has finished a book, he is apparently not concerned with the question how it will be presented, to what sort of audience; and sometimes he doesn't bother to keep a private copy of it. He said in a letter, "I think I have written a lot and sent it off to print before I actually realized strangers might read it." Others might say that Faulkner, at least in those early days, was not so much composing stories for the public as telling them to himself — like a lonely child in his imaginary world, but also like a writer of genius.

## II

Faulkner's mythical kingdom is a county in northern Mississippi, on the border between the sand hills covered with scrubby pine and the black earth of the river bottoms. Except for the storekeepers, mechanics, and professional men who live in Jefferson, the county seat, all the inhabitants are farmers or woodsmen. Except for a little lumber, their only product is baled cotton for the Memphis market. A few of them live in big plantation houses, the relics of another age, and more of them in substantial wooden farmhouses; but most of them are tenants, no better housed than slaves on good plantations before the

Civil War. Yoknapatawpha County — “William Faulkner, sole owner and proprietor,” as he inscribed on one of the maps he drew — has a population of 15,611 persons scattered over 2400 square miles. It sometimes seems to me that every house or hovel has been described in one of Faulkner’s novels; and that all the people of the imaginary county, black and white, townsmen, farmers, and housewives, have played their parts in one connected story.

He has so far written nine books wholly concerned with Yoknapatawpha County and its people, who also appear in parts of three others and in thirty or more uncollected stories. *Sartoris* was the first of the books to be published, in the spring of 1929; it is a romantic and partly unconvincing novel, but with many fine scenes in it, like the hero’s visit to a family of independent pine-hill farmers; and it states most of the themes that the author would later develop at length. *The Sound and the Fury* was written before *Sartoris*, but wasn’t published until six months later; it describes the fall of the Compson family, and it was the first of Faulkner’s novels to be widely discussed. The books that followed, in the Yoknapatawpha series, are *As I Lay Dying* (1930), about the death and burial of Addie Bundren; *Sanctuary* (1931), always the most popular of his novels; *Light in August* (1932), in many ways the best; *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), about Colonel Sutpen and his ambition to found a family; *The Unvanquished* (1938), a book of interrelated stories about the Sartoris dynasty; *The Wild Palms* (1939), half of which deals with a convict from back in the pine hills; *The Hamlet* (1940), a novel about the Snopes clan; and *Go Down, Moses* (1942), in which Faulkner’s theme is the Negroes. There are also many Yoknapatawpha stories in *These Thirteen* (1931) and *Dr. Martino* (1934), besides other stories privately printed (like “Miss Zilphia Gant”) or published in magazines and still to be collected or used as episodes in novels.

Just as Balzac, who seems to have inspired the series, divided his *Comédie Humaine* into “Scenes of Parisian Life,” “Scenes of Provincial Life,” “Scenes of Private Life,” so Faulkner might divide his work into a number of cycles: one about the planters and their descendants, one about the townspeople of Jefferson, one about the poor whites, one about the Indians (consisting of stories already written but never brought together), and one about the Negroes. Or again, if he adopted a division by families, there would be the Compson-Sartoris saga, the still unfinished Snopes saga, the McCaslin saga, dealing with the white and black descendants of Carothers McCaslin, and the Ratliff-Bundren saga, devoted to the backwoods farmers of Frenchman’s Bend. All the cycles or sagas are closely interconnected; it is as if each new book was a chord or segment of a total situation always existing in the author’s mind. Sometimes a short story is the sequel to an earlier novel. For example, we read in *Sartoris* that Byron Snopes stole a packet of letters from Narcissa Benbow; and in “There Was a Queen,” a story published five years later, we learn how Narcissa got the letters back again. Sometimes, on the other hand, a novel contains the sequel to a story;



and we discover from an incidental reference in *The Sound and the Fury* that the Negro woman whose terror of death was described in "That Evening Sun" had later been murdered by her husband, who left her body in a ditch for the vultures. Sometimes an episode has a more complicated history. Thus, in the first chapter of *Sanctuary*, we hear about the Old Frenchman place, a ruined mansion near which the people of the neighborhood had been "digging with secret and sporadic optimism for gold which the builder was reputed to have buried somewhere about the place when Grant came through the country on his Vicksburg campaign." Later this digging for gold served as the subject of a story published in the *Saturday Evening Post*: "Lizards in Jamshyd's Courtyard." Still later the story was completely rewritten and became the last chapter of *The Hamlet*.

As one book leads into another, Faulkner sometimes falls into inconsistencies of detail. There is a sewing-machine agent named V. K. Suratt who appears in *Sartoris* and some of the later stories. By the time we reach *The Hamlet*, his name has changed to Ratliff, although his character remains the same (and his age, too, for all the twenty years that separate the backgrounds of the two novels). Henry Armstid is a likable figure in *As I Lay Dying* and *Light in August*; in *The Hamlet* he is mean and half-demented. His wife, whose character remains consistent, is called Lula in one book and Martha in another; in the third she is nameless. There is an Indian chief named Doom who appears in several stories; he starts as the father of Issetibeha and ends as his grandson. The mansion called Sutpen's Hundred was built of brick at the beginning of *Absalom, Absalom!* but at the end of the novel it is all wood and inflammable except for the chimneys. But these errors are comparatively few and inconsequential, considering the scope of Faulkner's series; and I should judge that most of them are afterthoughts rather than oversights.

All his books in the Yoknapatawpha saga are part of the same living pattern. It is this pattern, and not the printed volumes in which part of it is recorded, that is Faulkner's real achievement. Its existence helps to explain one feature of his work: that each novel, each long or short story, seems to reveal more than it states explicitly and to have a subject bigger than itself. All the separate works are like blocks of marble from the same quarry: they show the veins and faults of the mother rock. Or else — to use a rather strained figure — they are like wooden planks that were cut, not from a log, but from a still living tree. The planks are planed and chiseled into their final shapes, but the tree itself heals over the wound and continues to grow. Faulkner is incapable of telling the same story twice without adding new details. In the present volume I wanted to use part of *The Sound and the Fury*, the novel that deals with the fall of the Compson family. I thought that the last part of the book would be most effective as a separate episode, but still it depended too much on what had gone before. Faulkner offered to write a very brief introduction that would explain the relations of the characters. What he finally sent me is the much longer passage here

printed as an appendix: a genealogy of the Compsons from their first arrival in this country. Whereas the novel is confined to a period of eighteen years ending in 1928, the genealogy goes back to the battle of Culloden in 1745, and forward to the year 1945, when Jason, last of the Compson males, has sold the family mansion, and Sister Caddy has last been heard of as the mistress of a German general. The novel that Faulkner wrote about the Compsons had long ago been given its final shape; but the pattern or body of legend behind the novel — and behind all his other books — was still developing.

Although the pattern is presented in terms of a single Mississippi county, it can be extended to the Deep South as a whole; and Faulkner always seems conscious of its wider application. He might have been thinking of his own novels when he described the ledgers in the commissary of the McCaslin plantation, in *Go Down, Moses*. They recorded, he said, “that slow trickle of molasses and meal and meat, of shoes and straw hats and overalls, of plowlines and collars and heelbolts and clevises, which returned each fall as cotton” — in a sense they were local and limited; but they were also “the continuation of that record which two hundred years had not been enough to complete and another hundred would not be enough to discharge; that chronicle which was a whole land in miniature, which multiplied and compounded was the entire South.”

### III

“Tell about the South,” says Quentin Compson’s roommate at Harvard, a Canadian named Shreve McCannon who is curious about the unknown region beyond the Ohio. “What’s it like there?” he asks. “What do they do there? Why do they live there? Why do they live at all?” And Quentin, whose background is a little like that of Faulkner himself and who sometimes seems to speak for him — Quentin answers, “You can’t understand it. You would have to be born there.” Nevertheless, he tells a long and violent story that he regards as the essence of the Deep South, which is not so much a mere region as it is, in Quentin’s mind, an incomplete and frustrated nation trying to relive its legendary past.

The story he tells — I am trying to summarize the plot of *Absalom, Absalom!* — is that of a mountain boy named Thomas Sutpen whose family drifted into the Virginia lowlands, where his father found odd jobs on a plantation. One day the father sent him with a message to the big house, but he was turned away at the door by a black man in livery. Puzzled and humiliated, the mountain boy was seized upon by the lifelong ambition to which he would afterward refer as “the design.” He too would own a plantation with slaves and a liveried butler; he would build a mansion as big as any of those in the Tidewater; and he would have a son to inherit his wealth.

A dozen years later, Sutpen appeared in the frontier town of Jefferson, where he managed to obtain a hundred square miles of land from the Chicka-

saws. With the help of twenty wild Negroes from the jungle and a French architect, he set about building the largest house in northern Mississippi, using timbers from the forest and bricks that his Negroes molded and baked on the spot; it was as if his mansion, Sutpen's Hundred, had been literally torn from the soil. Only one man in Jefferson — he was Quentin's grandfather, General Compson — ever learned how and where Sutpen had acquired his slaves. He had shipped to Haiti from Virginia, worked as overseer on a sugar plantation and married the rich planter's daughter, who had borne him a son. Then, finding that his wife had Negro blood, he had simply put her away, with her child and her fortune, while keeping the twenty slaves as a sort of indemnity.

In Jefferson, Sutpen married again. This time his wife belonged to a pious family of the neighborhood, and she bore him two children, Henry and Judith. He became the biggest cotton planter in Yoknapatawpha County, and it seemed that his "design" had already been fulfilled. At this moment, however, Henry came home from the University of Mississippi with an older and worldlier new friend, Charles Bon, who was in reality Sutpen's son by his first marriage. Charles became engaged to Judith. Sutpen learned his identity and, without making a sign of recognition, ordered him from the house. Henry, who refused to believe that Charles was his half-brother, renounced his birthright and followed him to New Orleans. In 1861, all the male Sutpens went off to war, and all of them survived four years of fighting. Then, in the spring of 1865, Charles suddenly decided to marry Judith, even though he was certain by now that she was his half-sister. Henry rode beside him all the way back to Sutpen's Hundred, but tried to stop him at the gate, killed him when he insisted on going ahead with his plan, told Judith what he had done, and disappeared.

But Quentin's story of the Deep South does not end with the war. Colonel Sutpen came home, he says, to find his wife dead, his son a fugitive, his slaves dispersed (they had run away even before they were freed by the Union army), and most of his land about to be seized for debt. Still determined to carry out "the design," he did not even pause for breath before undertaking to restore his house and plantation to what they had been. The effort failed and Sutpen was reduced to keeping a crossroads store. Now in his sixties, he tried again to beget a son; but his wife's younger sister, Miss Rosa Coldfield, was outraged by his proposal ("Let's try it," he had said, "and if it's a boy we'll get married"); and later poor Milly Jones, with whom he had an affair, gave birth to a baby girl. At that Sutpen abandoned hope and provoked Milly's grandfather into killing him. Judith survived her father for a time, as did the halfcaste son of Charles Bon by a New Orleans octoroon. After the death of these two by yellow fever, the great house was haunted rather than inhabited by an ancient mulatto woman, Sutpen's daughter by one of his slaves. The fugitive Henry Sutpen came home to die; the townspeople heard of his illness and sent an ambulance after him; but old Clytie thought they were arresting him for murder and set fire to

Sutpen's Hundred. The only survival of the conflagration was Jim Bond, a half-witted creature who was Charles Bon's grandson.

"Now I want you to tell me just one thing more," Shreve McCannon says after hearing the story. "Why do you hate the South?" — "I don't hate it," Quentin says quickly, at once, "I don't hate it," he repeats, speaking for the author as well as himself. *I don't hate it*, he thinks, panting in the cold air, the iron New England dark; *I don't. I don't hate it! I don't hate it!*

The reader cannot help wondering why this somber and, at moments, plainly incredible story had so seized upon Quentin's mind that he trembled with excitement when telling it and felt that it revealed the essence of the Deep South. It seems to belong in the realm of Gothic romances, with Sutpen's Hundred taking the place of the haunted castle on the Rhine, with Colonel Sutpen as Faust and Charles Bon as Manfred. Then slowly it dawns on you that most of the characters and incidents have a double meaning; that besides their place in the story, they also serve as symbols or metaphors with a general application. Sutpen's great design, the land he stole from the Indians, the French architect who built his house with the help of wild Negroes from the jungle, the woman of mixed blood whom he married and disowned, the unacknowledged son who ruined him, the poor white whom he wronged and who killed him in anger, the final destruction of the mansion like the downfall of a social order: all these might belong to a tragic fable of Southern history. With a little cleverness, the whole novel might be explained as a connected and logical allegory, but this, I think, would be going far beyond the author's intention. First of all he was writing a story, and one that affected him deeply, but he was also brooding over a social situation. More or less unconsciously, the incidents in the story came to represent the forces and elements in the social situation, since the mind naturally works in terms of symbols and parallels. In Faulkner's case, this form of parallelism is not confined to *Absalom, Absalom!* It can be found in the whole fictional framework that he has been elaborating in novel after novel, until his work has become a myth or legend of the South.

I call it a legend because it is obviously no more intended as a historical account of the country south of the Ohio than *The Scarlet Letter* was intended as a history of Massachusetts or *Paradise Lost* as a factual description of the Fall. Briefly stated, the legend might run something like this: The Deep South was settled partly by aristocrats like the Sartoris clan and partly by new men like Colonel Sutpen. Both types of planters were determined to establish a lasting social order on the land they had seized from the Indians (that is, to leave sons behind them). They had the virtue of living single-mindedly by a fixed code; but there was also an inherent guilt in their "design," their way of life; it was slavery that put a curse on the land and brought about the Civil War. After the War was lost, partly as a result of their own mad heroism (for who else but men as brave as Jackson and Stuart could have frightened the Yankees into standing

together and fighting back?) they tried to restore "the design" by other methods. But they no longer had the strength to achieve more than a partial success, even after they had freed their land from the carpetbaggers who followed the Northern armies. As time passed, moreover, the men of the old order found that they had Southern enemies too: they had to fight against a new exploiting class descended from the landless whites of slavery days. In this struggle between the clan of Sartoris and the unscrupulous tribe of Snopes, the Sartorises were defeated in advance by a traditional code that kept them from using the weapons of the enemy. As a price of victory, however, the Snopeses had to serve the mechanized civilization of the North, which was morally impotent in itself, but which, with the aid of its Southern retainers, ended by corrupting the Southern nation.

Faulkner's novels of contemporary Southern life continue the legend into a period that he regards as one of moral confusion and social decay. He is continually seeking in them for violent images to convey his sense of despair. *Sanctuary* is the most violent of all his novels; it is also the most popular and by no means the least important (in spite of Faulkner's comment that it was "a cheap idea . . . deliberately conceived to make money"). The story of Popeye and Temple Drake has more meaning than appears on a first hasty reading — the only reading that most of the critics have been willing to grant it. Popeye himself is one of several characters in Faulkner's novels who represent the mechanical civilization that has invaded and partly conquered the South. He is always described in mechanical terms: his eyes "looked like rubber knobs"; his face "just went awry, like the face of a wax doll set too near a hot fire and forgotten"; his tight suit and stiff hat were "all angles, like a modernistic lampshade"; and in general he had "that vicious depthless quality of stamped tin." Popeye was the son of a professional strikebreaker, from whom he had inherited syphilis, and the grandson of a pyromaniac. Like two other villains in Faulkner's novels, Joe Christmas and Januarius Jones, he had spent most of his childhood in an institution. He was the man "who made money and had nothing he could do with it, spend it for, since he knew that alcohol would kill him like poison, who had no friends and had never known a woman" — in other words, he was the compendium of all the hateful qualities that Faulkner assigns to finance capitalism. *Sanctuary* is not a connected allegory, as one critic explained it, but neither is it a mere accumulation of pointless horrors. It is an example of the Freudian method turned backward, being full of sexual nightmares that are in reality social symbols. It is somehow connected in the author's mind with what he regards as the rape and corruption of the South.

In all his novels dealing with the present, Faulkner makes it clear that the descendants of the old ruling caste have the wish but not the courage or the strength to prevent this new disaster. They are defeated by Popeye (like Horace Benbow), or they run away from him (like Gowan Stevens, who had gone to school at Virginia and learned to drink like a gentleman, but not to fight for

his principles), or they are robbed and replaced in their positions of influence by the Snopeses (like old Bayard Sartoris, the president of the bank), or they drug themselves with eloquence and alcohol (like Quentin Compson's father), or they retire into the illusion of being inviolable Southern ladies (like Mrs. Compson, who says, "It can't be simply to flout and hurt me. Whoever God is, He would not permit that. I'm a lady."), or they dwell so much on the past that they are incapable of facing the present (like Reverend Hightower of *Light in August*), or they run from danger to danger (like young Bayard Sartoris) frantically seeking their own destruction. Faulkner's novels are full of well-meaning and even admirable persons, not only the grandsons of the cotton aristocracy, but also pine-hill farmers and storekeepers and sewing-machine agents and Negro cooks and sharecroppers; but they are almost all of them defeated by circumstances and they carry with them a sense of their own doom.

They also carry, whether heroes or villains, a curious sense of submission to their fate. "There is not one of Faulkner's characters," says André Gide in his dialogue on "The New American Novelists," "who properly speaking, has a soul"; and I think he means that not one of them exercises the faculty of conscious choice between good and evil. They are haunted, obsessed, driven forward by some inner necessity. Like Miss Rosa Coldfield, in *Absalom, Absalom!*, they exist in "that dream state in which you run without moving from a terror in which you cannot believe, toward a safety in which you have no faith." Or, like the slaves freed by General Sherman's army, in *The Unvanquished*, they blindly follow the roads toward any river, believing that it will be their Jordan:

They were singing, walking along the road singing, not even looking to either side. The dust didn't even settle for two days, because all that night they still passed; we sat up listening to them, and the next morning every few yards along the road would be the old ones who couldn't keep up any more, sitting or lying down and even crawling along, calling to the others to help them; and the others — the young ones — not stopping, not even looking at them. "Going to Jordan," they told me. "Going to cross Jordan."

All Faulkner's characters, black and white, are a little like that. They dig for gold frenziedly after they have lost their hope of finding it (like Henry Armistid in *The Hamlet* and Lucas Beauchamp in *Go Down, Moses*); or they battle against and survive a Mississippi flood for the one privilege of returning to the state prison farm (like the tall convict in "Old Man"); or, a whole family together, they carry a body through flood and fire and corruption to bury it in the cemetery at Jefferson (like the Bundrens in *As I Lay Dying*); or they tramp the roads week after week in search of men who had promised but never intended to marry them (like Lena Grove, the pregnant woman of *Light in August*); or, pursued by a mob, they turn at the end to meet and accept death (like Joe Christmas in the same novel). Even when they seem to be guided by a conscious purpose, like Colonel Sutpen, it is not something they have chosen by an act of will, but

something that has taken possession of them: Sutpen's great design was "not what he wanted to do but what he just had to do, had to do it whether he wanted to or not, because if he did not do it he knew that he could never live with himself for the rest of his life." In the same way, Faulkner himself writes, not what he wants to, but what he just has to write whether he wants to or not.

## IV

He is not primarily a novelist: that is, his stories do not occur to him in book-length units of 70,000 to 150,000 words. Almost all his novels have some weakness in structure. Some of them combine two or more themes having little relation to each other, like *Light in August*, while others, like *The Hamlet*, tend to resolve themselves into a series of episodes resembling beads on a string. In *The Sound and the Fury*, which is superb as a whole, we can't be sure that the four sections of the novel are presented in the most effective order; at any rate, we can't fully understand and perhaps can't even read the first section until we have read the other three. *Absalom, Absalom!*, though pitched in too high a key, is structurally the soundest of all the novels in the Yoknapatawpha series; but even here the author's attention shifts halfway through the book from the principal theme of Colonel Sutpen's ambition to the secondary theme of incest and miscegenation.

Faulkner is best and most nearly himself either in long stories like "The Bear," in *Go Down, Moses*, and "Old Man," which was published as half of *The Wild Palms*, and "Spotted Horses," which was first printed separately, then greatly expanded and fitted into the loose framework of *The Hamlet* — all three stories are included in this volume; or else in the Yoknapatawpha saga as a whole. That is, he is most effective in dealing with the total situation that is always present in his mind as a pattern of the South; or else in shorter units that can be conceived and written in a single burst of creative effort. It is by his best that we should judge him, like every other author; and Faulkner at his best — even sometimes at his worst — has a power, a richness of life, an intensity to be found in no other American novelist of our time. He has — once more I am quoting from Henry James's essay on Hawthorne — "the element of simple genius, the quality of imagination."

Moreover, he has a brooding love for the land where he was born and reared and where, unlike other writers of his generation, he has chosen to spend his life. It is "... this land, this South, for which God has done so much, with woods for game and streams for fish and deep rich soil for seed and lush springs to sprout it and long summers to mature it and serene falls to harvest it and short mild winters for men and animals." So far as Faulkner's country includes the Delta, it is also (in the words of old Ike McCaslin)

... this land which man has deswamped and denuded and delivered in two generations so that white men can own plantations and commute every night to Memphis and

black men own plantations and ride in jimcrow cars to Chicago and live in millionaires' mansions on Lake Shore Drive, where white men rent farms and live like niggers and niggers crop on shares and live like animals, where cotton is planted and grows man-tall in the very cracks of the sidewalks, and usury and mortgage and bankruptcy and measureless wealth, Chinese and African and Aryan and Jew, all breed and spawn together.

Here are the two sides of Faulkner's feeling for the South: on the one side, an admiring and possessive love; on the other, a compulsive fear lest what he loves should be destroyed by the ignorance of its native serfs and the greed of traders and absentee landlords.

No other American writer takes such delight in the weather. He speaks in various novels of "the hot still pinewiney silence of the August afternoon"; of "the moonless September dust, the trees along the road not rising soaring as trees should but squatting like huge fowl"; of "the tranquil sunset of October mazy with windless wood-smoke"; of the "slow drizzle of November rain just above the ice point"; of "those windless Mississippi December days which are a sort of Indian summer's Indian summer"; of January and February when there is "no movement anywhere save the low constant smoke . . . and no sound save the chopping of axes and the lonely whistle of the daily trains." Spring in Faulkner's country is a hurried season, "all coming at once, pell mell and disordered, fruit and bloom and leaf, pied meadow and blossoming wood and the long fields shearing dark out of winter's slumber, to the shearing plow." Summer is dust-choked and blazing, and it lasts far into what should be autumn. "That's the one trouble with this country," he says in *As I Lay Dying*. "Everything, weather, all, hangs on too long. Like our rivers, our land: opaque, slow, violent; shaping and creating the life of man in its implacable and brooding image."

And Faulkner loves these people created in the image of the land. After a second reading of his novels, you continue to be impressed by his villains, Popeye and Jason and Joe Christmas and Flem Snopes; but this time you find more place in your memory for other figures standing a little in the background yet presented by the author with quiet affection: old ladies like Miss Jenny Du Pre, with their sharp-tongued benevolence; shrewd but kindly bargainers like Ratliff, the sewing-machine agent, and Will Varner, with his cotton gin and general store; long-suffering farm wives like Mrs. Henry Armstid (whether her name is Lula or Martha); and backwoods patriarchs like Pappy MacCullum, with his six middle-aged but unmarried sons named after the generals of Lee's army. You remember the big plantation houses that collapse in flames as if a whole civilization were dying, but you also remember men in patched and faded but quite clean overalls sitting on the gallery — here in the North we should call it the porch — of a crossroads store that is covered with posters advertising soft drinks and patent medicines; and you remember the stories they tell while chewing tobacco until the suption is out of it (everything in their world is re-



duced to anecdote, and every anecdote is based on character). You remember Quentin Compson, not in his despairing moments, but riding with his father behind the dogs as they quarter a sedge-grown hillside after quail; and not listening to his father's story, but still knowing every word of it, because, as he thought to himself, "You had learned, absorbed it already without the medium of speech somehow from having been born and living beside it, with it, as children will and do: so that what your father was saying did not tell you anything so much as it struck, word by word, the resonant strings of remembering."

Faulkner's novels have the quality of being lived, absorbed, remembered rather than merely observed. And they have what is rare in the novels of our time, a warmth of family affection, brother for brother and sister, the father for his children — a love so warm and proud that it tries to shut out the rest of the world. Compared with that affection, married love is presented as something calculating, and illicit love as a consuming fire. And because the blood relationship is central in his novels, Faulkner finds it hard to create sympathetic characters between the ages of twenty and forty. He is better with children, Negro and white, and incomparably good with older people who preserve the standards that have come down to them "out of the old time, the old days."

In his later books, which have attracted so little attention that they seem to have gone unread, there is a quality not exactly new to Faulkner — it had appeared already in passages of *Sartoris* and *Sanctuary* — but now much stronger and no longer overshadowed by violence and horror. It is a sort of homely and sober-sided frontier humor that is seldom achieved in contemporary writing (except by Erskine Caldwell, another Southerner). The horse-trading episodes in *The Hamlet*, and especially the long story of the spotted ponies from Texas, might have been inspired by the Davy Crockett almanacs. "Old Man," the story of the convict who surmounted the greatest of all the Mississippi floods, might almost be a continuation of *Huckleberry Finn*. It is as if some older friend of Huck's had taken the raft and drifted on from Aunt Sally Phelps's farm into wilder adventures, described in a wilder style, among Chinese and Cajuns and bayous crawling with alligators. In a curious way, Faulkner combines two of the principal traditions in American letters: the tradition of psychological horror, often close to symbolism, that begins with Charles Brockden Brown, our first professional novelist, and extends through Poe, Melville, Henry James (in his later stories), Stephen Crane, and Hemingway; and the other tradition of frontier humor and realism, beginning with Augustus Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes* and having Mark Twain as its best example.

But the American author he most resembles is Hawthorne, for all their polar differences. They stand to each other as July to December, as heat to cold, as swamp to mountain, as the luxuriant to the meager but perfect, as planter to Puritan; and yet Hawthorne had much the same attitude toward New England that Faulkner has toward the South, together with a strong sense of regional

particularity. The Civil War made Hawthorne feel that "the North and the South were two distinct nations in opinions and habits, and had better not try to live under the same institutions." In the spring of 1861, he wrote to his Bowdoin classmate Horatio Bridge, "We were never one people and never really had a country." — "New England," he said a little later, "is quite as large a lump of earth as my heart can really take in." But it was more than a lump of earth for him; it was a lump of history and a permanent state of consciousness. Like Faulkner in the South, he applied himself to creating its moral fables and elaborating its legends, which existed, as it were, in his solitary heart. Pacing the hillside behind his house in Concord, he listened for a voice; you might say that he lay in wait for it, passively but expectantly, like a hunter behind a rock; then, when it had spoken, he transcribed its words — more slowly and carefully than Faulkner, it is true; with more form and less fire, but with the same essential fidelity. If the voice was silent, he had nothing to write. "I have an instinct that I had better keep quiet," he said in a letter to his publisher. "Perhaps I shall have a new spirit of vigor if I wait quietly for it; perhaps not." Faulkner is another author who has to wait for the spirit and the voice. Essentially he is not a novelist, in the sense of not being a writer who sets out to observe actions and characters, then fits them into the architectural framework of a story. For all the weakness of his own poems, he is an epic or bardic poet in prose, a creator of myths that he weaves together into a legend of the South.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is the setting of Faulkner's works?
2. Summarize the "tragic fable of Southern history" which Faulkner elaborates, symbolically, in his novels. Do you agree with this interpretation of the South?
3. What was Faulkner's education? Trace the "world's judgment" of his novels from his early works to the present.
4. Explain "all the separate works are like blocks of marble from the same quarry."
5. In which of Faulkner's novels could you read more about the Snopes family, of "Barn Burning"?
6. What motivates the actions of Faulkner's characters? Are they masters of their fate?
7. What two principal traditions of American letters does Faulkner combine? What writer does he most resemble?
8. What defects of Faulkner does Cowley point out? What are his good qualities?

*Stephen Spender, English poet and critic, was hailed as "another Shelley" when his first verse appeared. When he was seventeen, he was supporting himself by printing chemists' labels on his own hand-press, and while still at Oxford he was publishing his early poetry. Poems (1933) was his first important book. More recently, he has edited the English critical magazine Horizon (with Cyril Connolly), and published his autobiography, World Within World (1951). Spender believes that true art does not represent an "escape" from life but instead says: "This is what life is like. It is even realer, less to be evaded, than you thought. But I offer you an example of acceptance and understanding. Now, go back and live!"*

### *Apology*

It would be inexcusable to discuss my own way of writing poetry unless I were able to relate this to a wider view of the problems which poets attempt to solve when they sit down at a desk or table to write, or walk around composing their poems in their heads. There is a danger of my appearing to put across my own experiences as the general rule, when every poet's way of going about his work and his experience of being a poet are different, and when my own poetry may not be good enough to lend my example any authority.

Yet the writing of poetry is an activity which makes certain demands of attention on the poet and which requires that he should have certain qualifications of ear, vision, imagination, memory and so on. He should be able to think in images, he should have as great a mastery of language as a painter has over his palette, even if the range of his language be very limited. All this means that, in ordinary society, a poet has to adapt himself, more or less consciously, to the demands of his vocation, and hence the peculiarities of poets and the condition of inspiration which many people have said is near to madness. One poet's example is only his adaptation of his personality to the demands of poetry, but if it is clearly stated it may help us to understand other poets, and even something of poetry.

Today we lack very much a whole view of poetry, and have instead many one-sided views of certain aspects of poetry which have been advertised as the only aims which poets should attempt. Movements such as free verse, imagism, surrealism, expressionism, personalism and so on, tend to make people think that poetry is simply a matter of not writing in metre or rhyme, or of free association, or of thinking in images, or of a kind of drawing room madness (surrealism) which corresponds to drawing room communism. Here is a string of ideas: Night, dark, stars, immensity, blue, voluptuous, clinging, columns,

clouds, moon, sickle, harvest, vast camp fire, hell. Is this poetry? A lot of strings of words almost as simple as this are set down on the backs of envelopes and posted off to editors or to poets by the vast army of amateurs who think that to be illogical is to be poetic, with that fond question. Thus I hope that this discussion of how poets work will imply a wider and completer view of poets.

### *Concentration*

The problem of creative writing is essentially one of concentration, and the supposed eccentricities of poets are usually due to mechanical habits or rituals developed in order to concentrate. Concentration, of course, for the purposes of writing poetry, is different from the kind of concentration required for working out a sum. It is a focussing of the attention in a special way, so that the poet is aware of all the implications and possible developments of his idea, just as one might say that a plant was not concentrating on developing mechanically in one direction, but in many directions, towards the warmth and light with its leaves, and towards the water with its roots, all at the same time.

Schiller liked to have a smell of rotten apples, concealed beneath the lid of his desk, under his nose when he was composing poetry. Walter de la Mare has told me that he must smoke when writing. Auden drinks endless cups of tea. Coffee is my own addiction, besides smoking a great deal, which I hardly ever do except when I am writing. I notice also that as I attain a greater concentration, this tends to make me forget the taste of the cigarette in my mouth, and then I have a desire to smoke two or even three cigarettes at a time, in order that the sensation from the outside may penetrate through the wall of concentration which I have built round myself.

For goodness' sake, though, do not think that rotten apples or cigarettes or tea have anything to do with the quality of the work of a Schiller, a de la Mare, or an Auden. They are a part of a concentration which has already been attained rather than the causes of concentration. De la Mare once said to me that he thought the desire to smoke when writing poetry arose from a need, not of a stimulus, but to canalize a distracting leak of his attention away from his writing towards the distraction which is always present in one's environment. Concentration may be disturbed by someone whistling in the street or the ticking of a clock. There is always a slight tendency of the body to sabotage the attention of the mind by providing some distraction. If this need for distraction can be directed into one channel — such as the odor of rotten apples or the taste of tobacco or tea — then other distractions outside oneself are put out of competition.

Another possible explanation is that the concentrated effort of writing poetry is a spiritual activity which makes one completely forget, for the time being, that one has a body. It is a disturbance of the balance of body and mind and for this reason one needs a kind of anchor of sensation with the physical world. Hence

the craving for a scent or taste or even, sometimes, for sexual activity. Poets speak of the necessity of writing poetry rather than of a liking for doing it. It is spiritual compulsion, a straining of the mind to attain heights surrounded by abysses and it cannot be entirely happy, for in the most important sense, the only reward worth having is absolutely denied: for, however confident a poet may be, he is never quite sure that all his energy is not misdirected nor that what he is writing is great poetry. At the moment when art attains its highest attainment it reaches beyond its medium of words or paints or music, and the artist finds himself realizing that these instruments are inadequate to the spirit of what he is trying to say.

Different poets concentrate in different ways. In my own mind I make a sharp distinction between two types of concentration: one is immediate and complete, the other is plodding and only completed by stages. Some poets write immediately works which, when they are written, scarcely need revision. Others write their poems by stages, feeling their way from rough draft to rough draft, until finally, after many revisions, they have produced a result which may seem to have very little connection with their early sketches.

These two opposite processes are vividly illustrated in two examples drawn from music: Mozart and Beethoven. Mozart thought out symphonies, quartets, even scenes from operas, entirely in his head — often on a journey or perhaps while dealing with pressing problems — and then he transcribed them, in their completeness, onto paper. Beethoven wrote fragments of themes in notebooks which he kept beside him, working on and developing them over years. Often his first ideas were of a clumsiness which makes scholars marvel how he could, at the end, have developed from them such miraculous results.

Thus genius works in different ways to achieve its ends. But although the Mozartian type of genius is the more brilliant and dazzling, genius, unlike virtuosity, is judged by greatness of results, not by brilliance of performance. The result must be the fullest development in a created aesthetic form of an original moment of insight, and it does not matter whether genius devotes a lifetime to producing a small result if that result be immortal. The difference between two types of genius is that one type (the Mozartian) is able to plumb the greatest depths of his own experience by the tremendous effort of a moment, the other (the Beethovenian) must dig deeper and deeper into his consciousness, layer by layer. What counts in either case is the vision which sees and pursues and attains the end; the logic of the artistic purpose.

A poet may be divinely gifted with a lucid and intense and purposive intellect; he may be clumsy and slow; that does not matter, what matters is integrity of purpose and the ability to maintain the purpose without losing oneself. Myself, I am scarcely capable of immediate concentration in poetry. My mind is not clear, my will is weak, I suffer from an excess of ideas and a weak sense of form. For every poem that I begin to write, I think of at least ten which I do not

write down at all. For every poem which I do write down, there are seven or eight which I never complete.

The method which I adopt therefore is to write down as many ideas as possible, in however rough a form, in notebooks (I have at least twenty of these, on a shelf beside my desk, going back over fifteen years). I then make use of some of the sketches and discard others.

The best way of explaining how I develop the rough ideas which I use, is to take an example. Here is a Notebook begun in 1944. About a hundred pages of it are covered with writing, and from this have emerged about six poems. Each idea, when it first occurs, is given a number. Sometimes the ideas do not get beyond one line. For example No. 3 (never developed) is the one line: —

*A language of flesh and roses.*

I shall return to this line in a few pages, when I speak of inspiration. For the moment, I turn to No. 13, because here is an idea which has been developed to its conclusion. The first sketch begins thus: —

a) *There are some days when the sea lies like a harp  
Stretched flat beneath the cliffs. The waves  
Like wires burn with the sun's copper glow  
[all the murmuring blue every silent]  
Between whose spaces every image  
Of sky [field and] hedge and field and boat  
Dwells like the huge face of the afternoon.  
[Lies]  
When the heat grows tired, the afternoon  
Out of the land may breathe a sigh  
[Across these wires like a hand. They vibrate  
With]  
Which moves across those wires like a soft hand  
[Then the vibration]  
Between whose spaces the vibration holds  
Every bird-cry, dog's bark, man-shout  
And creak of rollock from the land and sky  
With all the music of the afternoon.*

Obviously these lines are attempts to sketch out an idea which exists clearly enough on some level of the mind where it yet eludes the attempt to state it. At this stage, a poem is like a face which one seems to be able to visualize clearly in the eye of memory, but when one examines it mentally or tries to think it out, feature by feature, it seems to fade.

The idea of this poem is a vision of the sea. The faith of the poet is that if this vision is clearly stated it will be significant. The vision is of the sea stretched under a cliff. On top of the cliff there are fields, hedges, houses. Horses draw carts along lanes, dogs bark far inland, bells ring in the distance. The shore seems laden with hedges, roses, horses and men, all high above the sea, on a very fine

summer day when the ocean seems to reflect and absorb the shore. Then the small strung-out glittering waves of the sea lying under the shore are like the strings of a harp which catch the sunlight. Between these strings lies the reflection of the shore. Butterflies are wafted out over the waves, which they mistake for the fields of the chalky landscape, searching them for flowers. On a day such as this, the land, reflected in the sea, appears to enter into the sea, as though it lies under it, like Atlantis. The wires of the harp are like a seen music fusing seascape and landscape.

Looking at this vision in another way, it obviously has symbolic value. The sea represents death and eternity, the land represents the brief life of the summer and of one human generation which passes into the sea of eternity. But let me here say at once that although the poet may be conscious of this aspect of his vision, it is exactly what he wants to avoid stating, or even being too concerned with. His job is to recreate his vision, and let it speak its moral for itself. The poet must distinguish clearly in his own mind between that which most definitely must be said and that which must not be said. The unsaid inner meaning is revealed in the music and the tonality of the poem, and the poet is conscious of it in his knowledge that a certain tone of voice, a certain rhythm, are necessary.

In the next twenty versions of the poem I felt my way towards the clarification of the seen picture, the music and the inner feeling. In the first version quoted above, there is the phrase in the second and third lines

*The waves  
Like wires burn with the sun's copper glow.*

This phrase fuses the image of the sea with the idea of music, and it is therefore a key-phrase, because the theme of the poem is the fusion of the land with the sea. Here, then, are several versions of these one and a quarter lines, in the order in which they were written: —

- b) *The waves are wires  
Burning as with the secret song of fires*
- c) *The day burns in the trembling wires  
With a vast music golden in the eyes*
- d) *The day glows on its trembling wires  
Singing a golden music in the eyes*
- e) *The day glows on its burning wires  
Like waves of music golden to the eyes*
- f) *Afternoon burns upon its wires  
Lines of music dazzling the eyes*
- g) *Afternoon gilds its tingling wires  
To a visual silent music of the eyes*

In the final version, these two lines appear as in the following stanza: —

b) *There are some days the happy ocean lies  
Like an unfingered harp, below the land.  
Afternoon gilds all the silent wires  
Into a burning music of the eyes.*

*On mirroring paths between those fine-strung fires  
The shore, laden with roses, horses, spires,  
Wanders in water, imaged above ribbed sand.*

### *Inspiration*

The hard work evinced in these examples, which are only a fraction of the work put into the whole poem, may cause the reader to wonder whether there is no such thing as inspiration, or whether it is merely Stephen Spender who is uninspired. The answer is that everything in poetry is work except inspiration, whether this work is achieved at one swift stroke, as Mozart wrote his music, or whether it is a slow process of evolution from stage to stage. Here again, I have to qualify the word 'work,' as I qualified the word 'concentration': the work on a line of poetry may take the form of putting a version aside for a few days, weeks or years, and then taking it up again, when it may be found that the line has, in the interval of time, almost rewritten itself.

Inspiration is the beginning of a poem and it is also its final goal. It is the first idea which drops into the poet's mind and it is the final idea which he at last achieves in words. In between this start and this winning post there is the hard race, the sweat and toil.

Paul Valéry speaks of the "*une ligne donnée*" of a poem. One line is given to the poet by God or by nature, the rest he has to discover for himself.

My own experience of inspiration is certainly that of a line or a phrase or a word or sometimes something still vague, a dim cloud of an idea which I feel must be condensed into a shower of words. The peculiarity of the key word or line is that it does not merely attract, as, say, the word "braggadocio" attracts. It occurs in what seems to be an active, male, germinal form as though it were the centre of a statement requiring a beginning and an end, and as though it had an impulse in a certain direction. Here are examples: —

*A language of flesh and roses*

This phrase (not very satisfactory in itself) brings to my mind a whole series of experiences and the idea of a poem which I shall perhaps write some years hence. I was standing in the corridor of a train passing through the Black Country. I saw a landscape of pits and pitheads, artificial mountains, jagged yellow wounds in the earth, everything transformed as though by the toil of an enormous animal or giant tearing up the earth in search of prey or treasure. Oddly enough, a stranger next to me in the corridor echoed my inmost thought. He said: "Everything there is man-made." At this moment the line flashed into my head

*A language of flesh and roses.*



The sequence of my thought was as follows: the industrial landscape which seems by now a routine and act of God which enslaves both employers and workers who serve and profit by it, is actually the expression of man's will. Men willed it to be so, and pitheads, slag-heaps and the ghastly disregard of anything but the pursuit of wealth, are a symbol of modern man's mind. In other words, the world which we create — the world of slums and telegrams and newspapers — is a kind of language of our inner wishes and thoughts. Although this is so, it is obviously a language which has got outside our control. It is a confused language, an irresponsible senile gibberish. This thought greatly distressed me, and I started thinking that if the phenomena created by humanity are really like words in a language, what kind of language do we really aspire to? All this sequence of thought flashed into my mind with the answer which came before the question: *A language of flesh and roses.*

I hope this example will give the reader some idea of what I mean by inspiration. Now the line, which I shall not repeat again, is a way of thinking imaginatively. If the line embodies some of the ideas which I have related above, these ideas must be further made clear in other lines. That is the terrifying challenge of poetry. Can I think out the logic of images? How easy it is to explain here the poem that I would have liked to write! How difficult it would be to write it. For writing it would imply living my way through the imaged experience of all these ideas, which here are mere abstractions, and such an effort of imaginative experience requires a lifetime of patience and watching.

Here is an example of a cloudy form of thought germinated by the word *cross*, which is the key word of the poem which exists formlessly in my mind. Recently my wife had a son. On the first day that I visited her after the boy's birth, I went by bus to the hospital. Passing through the streets on the top of the bus, they all seemed very clean, and the thought occurred to me that everything was prepared for our child. Past generations have toiled so that any child born today inherits, with his generation, cities, streets, organization, the most elaborate machinery for living. Everything has been provided for him by people dead long before he was born. Then, naturally enough, sadder thoughts colored this picture for me, and I reflected how he also inherited vast maladjustments, vast human wrongs. Then I thought of the child as like a pin-point of present existence, the moment incarnate, in whom the whole of the past, and all possible futures *cross*. This word *cross* somehow suggested the whole situation to me of a child born into the world and also of the form of a poem about his situation. When the word *cross* appeared in the poem, the idea of the past should give place to the idea of the future and it should be apparent that the *cross* in which present and future meet is the secret of an individual human existence. And here again, the unspoken secret which lies beyond the poem, the moral significance of other meanings of the word "cross" begins to glow with its virtue that should never be said and yet should shine through every image in the poem.

This account of inspiration is probably weak beside the accounts that other poets might give. I am writing of my own experience, and my own inspiration seems to me like the faintest flash of insight into the nature of reality beside that of other poets whom I can think of. However, it is possible that I describe here a kind of experience which, however slight it may be, is far truer to the real poetic experience than Aldous Huxley's account of how a young poet writes poetry in his novel *Time Must Have a Stop*. It is hard to imagine anything more self-conscious and unpoetic than Mr. Huxley's account.

### *Memory*

If the art of concentrating in a particular way is the discipline necessary for poetry to reveal itself, memory exercised in a particular way is the natural gift of poetic genius. The poet, above all else, is a person who never forgets certain sense-impressions which he has experienced and which he can re-live again and again as though with all their original freshness.

All poets have this highly developed sensitive apparatus of memory, and they are usually aware of experiences which happened to them at the earliest age and which retain their pristine significance throughout life. The meeting of Dante and Beatrice when the poet was only nine years of age is the experience which became a symbol in Dante's mind around which the *Divine Comedy* crystallized. The experience of nature which forms the subject of Wordsworth's poetry was an extension of a childhood vision of "natural presences" which surrounded the boy Wordsworth. And his decision in later life to live in the Lake District was a decision to return to the scene of these childhood memories which were the most important experiences in his poetry. There is evidence for the importance of this kind of memory in all the creative arts, and the argument certainly applies to prose which is creative. Sir Osbert Sitwell has told me that his book *Before the Bombardment*, which contains an extremely civilized and satirical account of the social life of Scarborough before and during the last war, was based on his observations of life in that resort before he had reached the age of twelve.

It therefore is not surprising that although I have no memory for telephone numbers, addresses, faces and where I have put this morning's correspondence, I have a perfect memory for the sensation of certain experiences which are crystallized for me around certain associations. I could demonstrate this from my own life by the overwhelming nature of associations which, suddenly aroused, have carried me back so completely into the past, particularly into my childhood, that I have lost all sense of the present time and place. But the best proofs of this power of memory are found in the odd lines of poems written in notebooks fifteen years ago. A few fragments of unfinished poems enable me to enter immediately into the experiences from which they were derived, the circumstances in which they were written, and the unwritten feelings in the poem that were projected but never put into words.

*... Knowledge of a full sun  
That runs up his big sky, above  
The hill, then in those trees and throws  
His smiling on the turf.*

That is an incomplete idea of fifteen years ago, and I remember exactly a balcony of a house facing a road, and, on the other side of the road, pine trees, beyond which lay the sea. Every morning the sun sprang up, first of all above the horizon of the sea, then it climbed to the tops of the trees and shone on my window. And this memory connects with the sun that shines through my window in London now in spring and early summer. So that the memory is not exactly a memory. It is more like one prong upon which a whole calendar of similar experiences happening throughout years, collect. A memory once clearly stated ceases to be a memory, it becomes perpetually present, because every time we experience something which recalls it, the clear and lucid original experience imposes its formal beauty on the new experiences. It is thus no longer a memory but an experience lived through again and again.

Turning over these old notebooks, my eye catches some lines, in a projected long poem, which immediately re-shape themselves into the following short portrait of a woman's face: —

*Her eyes are gleaming fish  
Caught in her nervous face, as if in a net.  
Her hair is wild and fair, haloing her cheeks  
Like a fantastic flare of Southern sun.  
There is madness in her cherishing her children.  
Sometimes, perhaps a single time in years,  
Her wandering fingers stoop to arrange some flowers —  
Then in her hands her whole life stops and weeps.*

It is perhaps true to say that memory is the faculty of poetry, because the imagination itself is an exercise of memory. There is nothing we imagine which we do not already know. And our ability to imagine is our ability to remember what we have already once experienced and to apply it to some different situation. Thus the greatest poets are those with memories so great that they extend beyond their strongest experiences to their minutest observations of people and things far outside their own self-centredness (the weakness of memory is its self-centredness: hence the narcissistic nature of most poetry).

Here I can detect my own greatest weakness. My memory is defective and self-centred. I lack the confidence in using it to create situations outside myself, although I believe that, in theory, there are very few situations in life which a poet should not be able to imagine, because it is a fact that most poets have experienced almost every situation in life. I do not mean by this that a poet who writes about a Polar Expedition has actually been to the North Pole. I mean, though, that he has been cold, hungry, etc., so that it is possible for him by

remembering imaginatively his own felt experiences to know what it is like to explore the North Pole. That is where I fail. I cannot write about going to the North Pole.

### *Faith*

It is evident that a faith in their vocation, mystical in intensity, sustains poets. There are many illustrations from the lives of poets to show this, and Shakespeare's sonnets are full of expressions of his faith in the immortality of his lines.

From my experience I can clarify the nature of this faith. When I was nine, we went to the Lake District, and there my parents read me some of the poems of Wordsworth. My sense of the sacredness of the task of poetry began then, and I have always felt that a poet's was a sacred vocation, like a saint's. Since I was nine, I have wanted to be various things, for example, Prime Minister (when I was twelve). Like some other poets I am attracted by the life of power and the life of action, but I am still more repelled by them. Power involves forcing oneself upon the attention of historians by doing things and occupying offices which are, in themselves, important, so that what is truly powerful is not the soul of a so-called powerful and prominent man but the position which he fills and the things which he does. Similarly, the life of "action" which seems so very positive is, in fact, a selective, even a negative kind of life. A man of action does one thing or several things because he does not do something else. Usually men who do very spectacular things fail completely to do the ordinary things which fill the lives of most normal people, and which would be far more heroic and spectacular perhaps, if they did not happen to be done by many people. Thus in practice the life of action has always seemed to me an act of cutting oneself off from life.

Although it is true that poets are vain and ambitious, their vanity and ambition are of the purest kind attainable in this world, for the saint renounces ambition. They are ambitious to be accepted for what they ultimately are as revealed by their inmost experiences, their finest perceptions, their deepest feelings, their uttermost sense of truth, in their poetry. They cannot cheat about these things, because the quality of their own being is revealed not in the noble sentiments which their poetry expresses, but in sensibility, control of language, rhythm and music, things which cannot be attained by a vote of confidence from an electorate, or by the office of Poet Laureate. Of course, work is tremendously important, but, in poetry, even the greatest labor can only serve to reveal the intrinsic qualities of soul of the poet as he really is.

Since there can be no cheating, the poet, like the saint, stands in all his works before the bar of a perpetual day of judgment. His vanity of course is pleased by success, though even success may contribute to his understanding that popularity does not confer on him the favorable judgment of all the ages which he seeks. For what does it mean to be praised by one's own age, which is soaked in

crimes and stupidity, except perhaps that future ages, wise where we are foolish, will see him as a typical expression of this age's crimes and stupidity? Nor is lack of success a guarantee of great poetry, though there are some who pretend that it is. Nor can the critics, at any rate beyond a certain limited point of technical judgment, be trusted.

The poet's faith is therefore, firstly, a mystique of vocation, secondly, a faith in his own truth, combined with his own devotion to a task. There can really be no greater faith than the confidence that one is doing one's utmost to fulfil one's high vocation, and it is this that has inspired all the greatest poets. At the same time this faith is coupled with a deep humility because one knows that, ultimately, judgment does not rest with oneself. All one can do is to achieve nakedness, to be what one is with all one's faculties and perceptions, strengthened by all the skill which one can acquire, and then to stand before the judgment of time.

In my Notebooks, I find the following Prose Poem, which expresses these thoughts:

*Bring me peace bring me power bring me assurance. Let me reach the bright day, the high chair, the plain desk, where my hand at last controls the words, where anxiety no longer undermines me. If I don't reach these I'm thrown to the wolves, I'm a restless animal wandering from place to place, from experience to experience.*

*Give me the humility and the judgment to live alone with the deep and rich satisfaction of my own creating: not to be thrown into doubt by a word of spite or disapproval.*

*In the last analysis don't mind whether your work is good or bad so long as it has the completeness, the enormity of the whole world which you love.*

### *Song*

Inspiration and song are the irreducible final qualities of a poet which make his vocation different from all others. Inspiration is an experience in which a line or an idea is given to one, and perhaps also a state of mind in which one writes one's best poetry. Song is far more difficult to define. It is the music which a poem as yet unthought of will assume, the empty womb of poetry for ever in the poet's consciousness, waiting for the fertilizing seed.

Sometimes, when I lie in a state of half-waking half-sleeping, I am conscious of a stream of words which seem to pass through my mind, without their having a meaning, but they have a sound, a sound of passion, or a sound recalling poetry that I know. Again sometimes when I am writing, the music of the words I am trying to shape takes me far beyond the words, I am aware of a rhythm, a dance, a fury, which is as yet empty of words.

In these observations, I have said little about headaches, midnight oil, pints of beer or of claret, love affairs, and so on, which are supposed to be stations on the journeys of poets through life. There is no doubt that writing poetry, when a poem appears to succeed, results in an intense physical excitement, a

sense of release and ecstasy. On the other hand, I dread writing poetry, for, I suppose, the following reasons: a poem is a terrible journey, a painful effort of concentrating the imagination; words are an extremely difficult medium to use, and sometimes when one has spent days trying to say a thing clearly one finds that one has only said it dully; above all, the writing of a poem brings one face to face with one's own personality with all its familiar and clumsy limitations. In every other phase of existence, one can exercise the orthodoxy of a conventional routine: one can be polite to one's friends, one can get through the day at the office, one can pose, one can draw attention to one's position in society, one is — in a word — dealing with men. In poetry, one is wrestling with a god.

Usually, when I have completed a poem, I think "this is my best poem," and I wish to publish it at once. This is partly because I only write when I have something new to say, which seems more worth while than what I have said before, partly because optimism about my present and future makes me despise my past. A few days after I have finished a poem, I relegate it to the past of all my other wasted efforts, all the books I do not wish to open.

Perhaps the greatest pleasure I have got from poems that I have written is when I have heard some lines quoted which I have not at once recognized. And I have thought "how good and how interesting," before I have realized that they are my own.

In common with other creative writers I pretend that I am not, and I am, exceedingly affected by unsympathetic criticism, whilst praise usually makes me suspect that the reviewer does not know what he is talking about. Why are writers so sensitive to criticism? Partly, because it is their business to be sensitive, and they are sensitive about this as about other things. Partly, because every serious creative writer is really in his heart concerned with reputation and not with success (the most successful writer I have known, Sir Hugh Walpole, was far and away the most unhappy about his reputation, because the "high-brows" did not like him). Again, I suspect that every writer is secretly writing for *someone*, probably for a parent or teacher who did not believe in him in childhood. The critic who refuses to "understand" immediately becomes identified with this person, and the understanding of many admirers only adds to the writer's secret bitterness if this one refusal persists.

Gradually one realizes that there is always this someone who will not like one's work. Then, perhaps, literature becomes a humble exercise of faith in being all that one can be in one's art, of being more than oneself, expecting little, but with a faith in the mystery of poetry which gradually expands into a faith in the mysterious service of truth.

Yet what failures there are! And how much mud sticks to one; mud not thrown by other people but acquired in the course of earning one's living, answering or not answering the letters which one receives, supporting or not

supporting public causes. All one can hope is that this mud is composed of little grains of sand which will produce pearls.

#### QUESTIONS

1. How does de la Mare explain his desire to smoke while writing poetry?
2. In what two different ways did Mozart and Beethoven compose their music? Are all poems inspired? Define the qualities of "inspiration" and "song."
3. What kind of memory must a poet have? What are some of your most vivid memories of sense impressions?
4. Explain "there are very few situations in life which a poet should not be able to imagine, because . . . most poets have experienced almost every situation in life."
5. Which of Spender's suggestions on poetry writing might help the person who has no special genius but likes to write an occasional poem?

**Don Marquis**

pete the parrot and  
shakespeare

*Don Marquis, called "our closest spiritual descendant of Mark Twain," grew up in a small town in Illinois. He was the son of a physician and so "had all the diseases of the time and place free of charge." After a high school education and various odd jobs including study at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, he joined the staff of the Atlanta Constitution and was encouraged in his writing by the editor, Joel Chandler Harris. In 1912 he started his famous "Sun Dial" column on the New York Sun. There he created his most memorable characters, archy the cockroach and mehitabel the lady cat whose motto was "toujours gai." In addition to his archy and mehitabel and other humorous books like The Old Soak's History of the World (1937), he wrote serious poetry, plays, and novels.*

i got acquainted with  
a parrot named pete recently  
who is an interesting bird  
pete says he used  
to belong to the fellow

From *The Lives and Times of Archy and Mehitabel* by Don Marquis. Copyright 1946 by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

that ran the mermaid tavern  
in london then i said  
you must have known  
shakespeare know him said pete  
poor mutt i knew him well  
he called me pete and i called him  
bill but why do you say poor mutt  
well said pete bill was a  
disappointed man and was always  
boring his friends about what  
he might have been and done  
if he only had a fair break  
two or three pints of sack  
and sherries and the tears  
would trickle down into his  
beard and his beard would get  
soppy and wilt his collar  
i remember one night when  
bill and ben jonson and  
frankie beaumont  
were sopping it up

here i am ben says bill  
nothing but a lousy playwright  
and with anything like luck  
in the breaks i might have been  
a fairly decent sonnet writer  
i might have been a poet  
if i had kept away from the theatre

yes says ben i ve often  
thought of that bill  
but one consolation is  
you are making pretty good money  
out of the theatre

money money says bill what the hell  
is money what i want is to be  
a poet not a business man  
these damned cheap shows  
i turn out to keep the  
theatre running break my heart  
slap stick comedies and  
blood and thunder tragedies



and melodramas say i wonder  
 if that boy heard you order  
 another bottle frankie  
 the only compensation is that i get  
 a chance now and then  
 to stick in a little poetry  
 when nobody is looking  
 but hells bells that isn t  
 what i want to do  
 i want to write sonnets and  
 songs and spenserian stanzas  
 and i might have done it too  
 if i hadn t got  
 into this frightful show game  
 business business business  
 grind grind grind  
 what a life for a man  
 that might have been a poet

well says frankie beaumont  
 why don t you cut it bill  
 i can t says bill  
 i need the money i ve got  
 a family to support down in  
 the country well says frankie  
 anyhow you write pretty good  
 plays bill any mutt can write  
 plays for this london public  
 says bill if he puts enough  
 murder in them what they want  
 is kings talking like kings  
 never had sense enough to talk  
 and stabbings and stranglings  
 and fat men making love  
 and clowns basting each  
 other with clubs and cheap puns  
 and off color allusions to all  
 the smut of the day oh i know  
 what the low brows want  
 and i give it to them

well says ben jonson  
 don t blubber into the drink

brace up like a man  
and quit the rotten business  
i can t i can t says bill  
i ve been at it too long i ve got to  
the place now where i can t  
write anything else  
but this cheap stuff  
i m ashamed to look an honest  
young sonneteer in the face  
i live a hell of a life i do  
the manager hands me some mouldy old  
manuscript and says  
bill here s a plot for you  
this is the third of the month  
by the tenth i want a good  
script out of this that we  
can start rehearsals on  
not too big a cast  
and not too much of your  
damned poetry either  
you know your old  
familiar line of hokum  
they eat up that falstaff stuff  
of yours ring him in again  
and give them a good ghost  
or two and remember we gotta  
have something dick burbage can get  
his teeth into and be sure  
and stick in a speech  
somewhere the queen will take  
for a personal compliment and if  
you get in a line or two somewhere  
about the honest english yeoman  
it s always good stuff  
and it s a pretty good stunt  
bill to have the heavy villain  
a moor or a dago or a jew  
or something like that and say  
i want another  
comic welshman in this  
but i don t need to tell  
you bill you know this game

just some of your ordinary  
 hokum and maybe you could  
 kill a little kid or two a prince  
 or something they like  
 a little pathos along with  
 the dirt now you better see burbage  
 tonight and see what he wants  
 in that part oh says bill  
 to think i am  
 debasing my talents with junk  
 like that oh god what i wanted  
 was to be a poet  
 and write sonnet serials  
 like a gentleman should  
 well says i pete  
 bill s plays are highly  
 esteemed to this day  
 is that so says pete  
 poor mutt little he would  
 care what poor bill wanted  
 was to be a poet

archy

#### QUESTIONS

what did bill shakespeare really want to be according to pete what consolation did ben jonson offer who was frankie beaumont and how did pete the parrot happen to know these fellows what did the london low brows want to see in their plays and what did bill put over on them where did bill get his plots and what suggestions did the manager make about writing them up and why didn t poor bill quit the rotten business

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION XI

1. How much of the plot, characterization, etc. of the stories and plays under discussion do Cowley, Twain, and Atkinson give? Which presents the necessary details most successfully? What are the dangers of telling too much of the story in a criticism or review?
2. Compare the appreciative passages in the criticism in this section. Which critic is best at recreating the spirit of the writer he is discussing? Which gives the most perceptive statement of his author's purpose?
3. Discuss the merits of Faulkner's Plot, Character, Thought, Diction, and Spectacle. In what ways is Faulkner's work like the Greek tragedies which Aristotle discusses? Give examples.
4. Where in contemporary writing will you find brief dramatic and literary reviews like Atkinson's? more thorough studies like Cowley's and Twain's? What qualities in Atkinson's style and thought have won him recognition as a leading drama critic?
5. Compare Aristotle and Spender on poetry and the poet. For instance, which is more objective? what different kinds of poetry do they discuss?

6. Should a criticism always mention both good and bad qualities? Discuss Cowley, Twain, and Atkinson in this connection.
7. Discuss the inspiration of the poet Spender and the novelist Faulkner. Compare the "magnitude" of the lyric poem and the novel; compare with the drama. Which, according to Marquis, did Shakespeare consider the greatest art?

#### THEME TOPICS

1. Write a brief discussion, like Atkinson's, of a good radio or television play; or, with something of Twain's humor and factual evidence, tear apart a bad one.
2. Write a review of a juvenile book which was one of your favorites, addressing it to the age group (children's, or teen-age) to which you would recommend it.
3. Write a review of a book connected with your hobby; for instance, tennis, ceramics, hog-raising, tropical fish, photography, etc. Tell how the book is helpful, and correct any errors or disagree with any faulty conclusions.
4. Criticize a selection in this volume, giving good reasons if you did not like it, or, if you did, telling why someone else would like it.
5. If you have a collection of records or play an instrument, write a critical paper on some aspect of contemporary music; or, if you prefer art, visit a museum or exhibition and criticize a painting or collection of watercolors.
6. Write an essay on your favorite author, explaining his works, as Cowley does Faulkner's, in terms of his life and philosophy.
7. Write a paper on the novel, the drama, the short story, or poetry, defining it as an art form, as Aristotle does tragedy, and illustrating it with examples from current and classical literature.



## SECTION

# XII

## POETRY

Poetry, more than any other kind of writing, is the expression of imaginative insight into life. When Emily Dickinson describes the “bustle in a house,” the straightening up and storing away of possessions after a death as

The sweeping up the heart,  
And putting love away  
We shall not want to use again  
Until eternity,

or when W. H. Auden observes that

The solitude familiar to the poor  
Is feeling that the family next door,  
The way it talks, eats, dresses, loves, and hates,  
Is indistinguishable from one's own,

we recognize a truth that had not struck us before. When the departed relative's belongings are divided up and given away, how often the affection we have felt for him is also put on the shelf. And the poor — even when they do have enough to eat, what a monotonous round of assembly-line work, evening radio or movie programs, Sunday newspapers they are confined to. The poet has reminded us of something we did not know we knew.

Poetry is written in meter and usually in rime. That would seem to increase your troubles if you are called upon for a lyric or ballad as a theme; but it is surprising how the addition of meter and rime also seems to ennoble your language and deepen your insight. Many great prose writers have recommended the composition of poetry as the best early training for the writing of good prose. Because it's hard to fit them into meter and to find rimes, the writer of a poem must really think about words and their arrangement in sentences; and this practice carries over and helps him in his prose.

Take Whittier's robust ballad, “Skipper Ireson's Ride,” as a model that won't be too hard to imitate. The first thing you need is an exciting incident,

a brief, dramatic *story*. How about a hay ride you took last fall, or a sleigh ride last winter, or an epic struggle with a trout last spring? If someone fell out of the sleigh or into the brook, so much the better — some clearly defined climax like that, to build your ballad toward. Now what about rime and meter?

“Skipper Ireson’s Ride” is written in couplets: each two lines rime. But many ballads are written in a four-line stanza with only the second and fourth lines riming, and you may find that easier (see “Bonny Barbara Allan”). To find rimes (if you’ve never done it before), run down the alphabet in your head. Suppose you want something to go with *take* — try *ache, bake, break, cake, dake, drake, fake, flake, forsake*, etc. until you find a word that might be useful in saying what you want to say. Jot down several possibilities and choose the best. As for meter, that consists of a regular pattern of accented and unaccented syllables. In “Skipper Ireson’s Ride” there are four accented syllables to a line (“Of all the *rides* since the *birth* of *time*”), with either one or two unaccented syllables before each accented one — a rather rough, ballad meter. That shouldn’t be too hard to imitate; just a line with a good swing to it, with those four accented syllables.

The most commonly used meters, which you may want to try, are: (1) iambic, an unaccented and an accented syllable, “*like this*”; (2) trochaic, the accented first and then an unaccented, “*truly*”; (3) anapestic, two unaccented plus an accented, “*to the end*”; and (4) dactylic, an accented plus two unaccented, “*syllables*.” A line of poetry usually has three (trimeter), four (tetrameter), or five (pentameter) “feet” or accented syllables. There’s no law against sprinkling a few anapests through your iambic meter, or dactyls through your trochaic, or beginning an iambic line with a trochaic foot — just so your variations have rhythm.

Now back to “Skipper Ireson’s Ride,” the model for your ballad. First, Whittier *introduces* his tale with the stanza that tells us that this was the strangest ride in history; and this kind of clever introductory statement of your subject makes a good beginning. Then, he proceeds immediately to narrate the three *high points* of the action: the Skipper’s miserable ride out of Marblehead, tarred and feathered; the scene back in Chaleur Bay, his sailing away from a sinking ship, which led to his being tarred and feathered; and his final repentance. You should have a similar definite plot outline to follow, just hitting the high spots, because a ballad is a story told in brief, vivid flashes, with feeling. Make us see the sleigh ride as clearly as we see Floyd Ireson in his cart,

Body of turkey, head of owl,  
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,

or in Chaleur Bay, crying “Sink or swim! Brag of your catch of fish again!” and sailing off in the fog and rain. And let us *hear your characters talk* (dialogue is an essential part of every ballad), as we hear Ireson break at last:

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried, —  
 "What to me is this noisy ride?  
 What is the shame that clothes the skin  
 To the nameless horror that lives within?"

And the wife of the skipper lost at sea says, "God has touched him! why should we!" Ireson is left to his bitter remorse.

A dramatic situation, developed in dialogue, often with pathos or humor, often with a refrain — these are some basic ingredients of ballads, as we can see from examining the genuine "folk ballads," memorized and handed down from father to son, of which the "literary ballads" like "Skipper Ireson's Ride" are imitations. John Henry, fighting against the steam drill, burst his heart; he "laid down his hammer an' he died." Barbara Allan, having cruelly rejected her lover and thereby caused his death, "heard the dead-bell ringing" as she walked home — and asked her mother to make her bed so she could "die for him tomorrow." The action need not always be tragic: the sassy wife in "Get Up and Bar the Door" "gied three skips" when her husband spoke first and lost the bet. Often there is a very effective refrain, like the poor cowboy's in "As I Walked Out in the Streets of Laredo": "For I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done wrong." And sometimes there is a clever device known as "incremental repetition," by which a line is repeated in each stanza with a slight change, and so moves the story forward. For example, in "De Ballet of de Boll Weevil" the successive stanzas begin "Boll weevil say to de merchan'," "Boll weevil say to de doctah," "Boll weevil say to de preacher," etc., each stanza bringing out some new mischief the pesky weevil is causing.

Not so simple as these folk ballads are the more literary narrative and the other poems which follow in this section. William Morris's "The Haystack in the Floods," for example, is the dramatic final episode of a tragedy, like the closing scene in one of Shakespeare's plays:

Had she come all the way for this,  
 To part at last without a kiss?  
 Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain  
 That her own eyes might see him slain  
 Beside the haystack in the floods?

Morris paints an unforgettable picture — the dismal rain that mingles with Jehane's tears, brutal Godmar with his sword drawn to take Robert's life if Jehane will not yield to him. At the same time, he shows us something about the relations of men and women.

Shakespeare's lyrics have the apparent simplicity of the ballads in their rime and meter —

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
 Thou art not so unkind  
 As man's ingratitude,



or

O mistress mine! where are you roaming?  
O stay and hear; your true love's coming —

but they have an indefinable perfection of what Stephen Spender has called "song," a quality which the ballads do not often attain. They are pastoral, frequently, about shepherds and country scenes, and they were written to be sung on the stage, in one of the great periods of English music. You can hear them on recordings of tunes by Elizabethan and later composers. The sonnets have the same fine choice of words and a special thoughtfulness or wisdom of their own. They are about love, friendship, the poet's varying moods, with the motif of the immortality of his poetry recurring like the theme of a Beethoven symphony.

In Keats's distinctive odes, the great theme is the eternity of beauty. The ode, even more than the sonnet, is a reflective poem, and Keats uses it for the thoughts suggested to him by the "leaf-fringed legend" of a Grecian urn, or the "full-throated" song of the nightingale. These beautiful things become for him the symbols of Beauty itself. The nightingale will never die:

The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn. . . .

The same Beauty is his goal in his narrative "The Eve of St. Agnes," with its rich medieval decoration (the Beadsman's "frosted breath," "the argent revelry, With plume, tiara, and all rich array").

Robert Browning is the psychologist among poets, and therefore especially popular in the twentieth century. His dramatic monologues are subtle studies of human personality. In "My Last Duchess" notice how the Duke is trying to impress the envoy with his exquisite taste, his prestige, his fine manners — and succeeds in revealing his avarice, cruelty, and diabolical pride. In "The Last Ride Together" the speaker philosophizes about his hopeless love and in the process suggests, obliquely, the character of his mistress; while "Count Gismond" presents a whole gallery of sharply etched human beings: jealous cousins, innocent orphaned girl, blackguard Gauthier, heroic, generous Gismond.

Where her husband is dramatic and objective, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in her *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, is subjective, tracing the growth of her love for him through their courtship: the first wonder of it, the fear, then the acceptance and joying in it, the remembering how it was before he came into her life, the recalling of the little incidents in and the progression of their love, a last hesitation ("If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange And be all to me?"), and the final serene happiness. They are her love letters set to music. If you like

them, you would like Edna St. Vincent Millay's even more modern love sonnets, in such books as *Fatal Interview*.

The dramatic monologue used by Browning and the sonnet used by Shakespeare, Keats, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and many others are important forms which we should define. A sonnet is a fourteen line poem with an intricate rime scheme: *abba abba cde cde* in the most orthodox form, with variations of the three rimes in the last six lines rather common. Shakespeare uses the easier *abab cdcd efef gg* pattern. A dramatic monologue may have any meter and rime scheme, but must have only one speaker (hence a *monologue*) who is talking to someone else (hence *dramatic*), uncovering the motives that govern his actions.

Of course, character revelation may be given in dialogue, too, as in Frost's "Mending Wall." "Good fences make good neighbours," says the old-fashioned farmer who wants the stone wall to be kept up as it always has been. "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know What I was walling in or walling out," retorts his more thoughtful neighbor. A point has been made, but through conversation rather than by the poet's direct say-so. Frost's "The Death of the Hired Man" shows not only his command of dialogue but also the colloquial realistic style which we often find in modern poetry, replacing the romantic beauty of diction that Keats strove for. For example, note such a homely detail as:

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,  
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back  
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.

Isn't that characteristic of a man trying to make up his mind? But you will seldom find that kind of detail in Keats; perhaps the gnats in his "To Autumn" come nearest.

Nevertheless, you will find, in Frost himself, in Housman, and in Auden, the apprehension of the beauty that Keats loved: in Frost's lovely lyric "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," in Housman's classically perfect "Loveliest of trees, the cherry now," in the song which Auden writes for Mary in his Christmas oratorio, "O shut your bright eyes that mine must endanger." Here are the great accents of English poetry, from the age of Shakespeare and before, a living tradition carried on through our own times. In Mary's words to her Infant Son you will hear the echoes of two thousand years in the thought, and over a thousand in the rhythms of our English speech:

Dream. In human dreams earth ascends to Heaven  
Where no one need pray nor ever feel alone.  
In your first few hours of life here, O have you  
Chosen already what death must be your own?  
How soon will you start on the Sorrowful Way?  
Dream while you may.

## BALLADS AND STORIES IN RIME

### John Henry

John Henry tol' his cap'n  
Dat a man wuz a natural man,  
An' befo' he'd let dat steam drill run  
him down,  
He'd fall dead wid a hammer in his  
han',  
He'd fall dead wid a hammer in his  
han'.

Cap'n he sez to John Henry:  
"Gonna bring me a steam drill 'round;  
Take that steel drill out on the job,  
Gonna whop that steel on down,  
Gonna whop that steel on down."

John Henry sez to his cap'n:  
"Send me a twelve-pound hammer  
aroun',  
A twelve-pound hammer wid a fo'-  
foot handle,  
An' I beat yo' steam drill down,  
An' I beat yo' steam drill down."

John Henry sez to his shaker:  
"Niggah, why don' yo' sing?  
I'm throwin' twelve poun' from my  
hips on down,  
Jes' lissen to de col' steel ring,  
Jes' lissen to de col' steel ring!"

John Henry went down de railroad  
Wid a twelve-poun' hammer by his  
side,  
He walked down de track but he  
didn' come back,  
'Cause he laid down his hammer an'  
he died,  
'Cause he laid down his hammer an'  
he died."

John Henry hammered in de moun-  
tains,  
De mountains wuz so high.  
De las' words I heard de pore boy  
say:  
"Gimme a cool drink o' watah fo'  
I die,  
Gimme a cool drink o' watah fo'  
I die!"

John Henry had a little baby,  
Hel' him in de palm of his han'.  
De las' words I heard de pore boy say:  
"Son, yo're gonna be a steel-drivin'  
man,  
Son, yo're gonna be a steel-drivin'  
man!"

John Henry had a 'ooman,  
De dress she wo' wuz blue.  
De las' words I heard de pore gal say:  
"John Henry, I ben true to yo',  
John Henry, I ben true to yo'."

John Henry had a li'l 'ooman,  
De dress she wo' wuz brown.  
De las' words I heard de pore gal say:  
"I'm goin' w'eah mah man went  
down,  
I'm goin' w'eah mah man went  
down!"

John Henry had anothah 'ooman,  
De dress she wo' wuz red.  
De las' words I heard de pore gal say:  
"I'm goin' w'eah mah man drapt  
daid,  
I'm goin' w'eah mah man drapt daid!"

"John Henry," "De Ballet of de Boll Weevil," and "As I Walked Out in the Streets of Laredo" are taken from *The American Songbag*, compiled by Carl Sandburg, copyright 1927 by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

John Henry had a li'l 'ooman,  
Her name wuz Polly Ann.  
On de day John Henry he drap daid,  
Polly Ann hammered steel like a man,  
Polly Ann hammered steel like a man.

W'eah did yo' git dat dress!  
W'eah did you git dose shoes so fine?  
Got dat dress f'm a railroad man,  
An' shoes f'm a driver in a mine,  
An' shoes f'm a driver in a mine.

## Bonny Barbara Allan

It was in and about the Martinmas  
time,  
When the green leaves were a fall-  
ing,  
That Sir John Graeme, in the West  
Country,  
Fell in love with Barbara Allan.

He sent his men down through the  
town  
To the place where she was dwell-  
ing:

"O haste and come to my master dear,  
Gin ye be Barbara Allan."

O hooly, hooly rose she up,  
To the place where he was lying,  
And when she drew the curtain by,  
"Young man, I think you're dy-  
ing."

"O 'tis I'm sick, and very, very  
sick,

And 'tis a' for Barbara Allan";

"O the better for me ye's never be,  
Tho your heart's blood were a  
spilling.

"O dinna ye mind, young man," said  
she,

"When ye was in the tavern a drink-  
ing,

That ye made the healths gae round  
and round,  
And slighted Barbara Allan?"

He turned his face unto the wall,  
And death was with him dealing:  
"Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all,  
And be kind to Barbara Allan."

And slowly, slowly raise she up,  
And slowly, slowly left him,  
And sighing said she coud not stay,  
Since death of life had reft him.

She had not gane a mile but twa,  
When she heard the dead-bell ring-  
ing,

And every jow that the dead-bell geid,  
It cry'd, Woe to Barbara Allan!

"O mother, mother, make my bed!  
O make it saft and narrow!  
Since my love died for me today,  
I'll die for him tomorrow."

## Get Up and Bar the Door

It fell about the Martinmas time,  
 And a gay time it was then,  
 When our goodwife got puddings to  
 make,  
 And she's boild them in the pan.

The wind sae cauld blew south and  
 north,  
 And blew into the floor;  
 Quoth our goodman to our goodwife,  
 "Gae out and bar the door."

"My hand is in my hussyfskap,  
 Goodman, as ye may see;  
 An it shoud nae be barrd this hundred  
 year,  
 It's no be barrd for me!"

They made a paction tween them twa,  
 They made it firm and sure,  
 That the first word whaeer shoud  
 speak,  
 Shoud rise and bar the door.

Then by there came two gentlemen,  
 At twelve oclock at night,  
 And they could neither see house nor  
 hall,  
 Nor coal nor candle-light.

"Now whether is this a rich man's  
 house,  
 Or whether is it a poor?"

But neer a word would ane o them  
 speak,  
 For barring of the door.

And first they ate the white puddings,  
 And then they ate the black;  
 Tho muckle thought the goodwife to  
 hersel,  
 Yet neer a word she spake.

Then said the one unto the other,  
 "Here, man, tak ye my knife;  
 Do ye tak aff the auld man's beard,  
 And I'll kiss the goodwife."

"But there's nae water in the house.  
 And what shall we do than?"  
 "What ails ye at the pudding-broo,  
 That boils into the pan?"

O up then started our goodman,  
 An angry man was he:  
 "Will ye kiss my wife before my een,  
 And scad me wi pudding-bree?"

Then up and started our goodwife,  
 Gied three skips on the floor:  
 "Goodman, you've spoken the fore-  
 most word,  
 Get up and bar the door!"

## De Ballet of de Boll Weevil

De farmer say to de weevil:  
"What you doin' on de square?"  
De li'l bug say to de farmer:  
"Got a nice big fambly dere;  
Goin' to have a home, goin' to have  
a home."

Farmer say to de boll weevil:  
"You's right up on de square."  
Boll weevil say to de farmer:  
"Mah whole fambly's there,  
I have a home, I have a home."

Boll weevil say to de lightnin' bug:  
"Can I get up a trade wid you?  
If I was a lightnin' bug,  
I'd work the whole night through,  
All night long, all night long."

Don' you see dem creepers  
Now have done me wrong?  
Boll weevil got my cotton,  
An' de merchan' got my corn;  
What shall I do? I've got de blues.

Boll weevil say to de merchan':  
"Bettah drink yo' col' lemonade;  
W'en I get through wid you,  
Goin' to drag you out o' dat shade,  
I have a home, I have a home."

Boll weevil say to de doctah:  
"Bettah pull out all dem pills,  
W'en I get through wid de farmer,  
Can't pay no doctah's bills.  
I have a home, I have a home."

Boll weevil say to de preacher:  
"Bettah close up dem church doors,  
W'en I get through wid de farmer,  
Can't pay de preacher no mo'.  
I have a home, I have a home."

Boll weevil say to de farmer:  
"You can ride in dat Fohd machine.  
But w'en I get through wid yo' cotton,  
Can't buy no gasoline,  
Won't have no home, won't have no  
home."

Boll weevil say to de farmer:  
"I'm a sittin' here on dis gate,  
W'en I get through wid de farmer,  
He's goin' to sell his Cadillac Eight,  
I have a home, I have a home."

Boll weevil say to his wife:  
"Bettah stan' up on yo' feet,  
Look way down in Mississippi,  
At de cotton we'd got to eat,  
All night long, all night long."

De farmer say to de merchan':  
"I want some meat an' meal!"  
"Get away f'm here, yo' son-of-a-gun,  
Yo' got boll weevils in yo' fiel',  
Goin' to get yo' home, goin' to get  
yo' home."

Boll weevil say to de farmer,  
"I wish you all is well!"  
Farmer say to de boll weevil:  
"I wish you wuz in hell!  
I'd have a home, I'd have a home."

## As I Walked Out in the Streets of Laredo

As I walked out in the streets of  
Laredo,

As I walked out in Laredo one day,  
I spied a poor cowboy wrapped up  
in white linen,

Wrapped up in white linen and cold  
as the clay.

"I see by your outfit that you are a  
cowboy,"

These words he did say as I boldly  
stepped by.

"Come sit down beside me and hear  
my sad story;

I was shot in the breast and I know I  
must die.

"Let sixteen gamblers come handle  
my coffin,

Let sixteen cowboys come sing me a  
song,

Take me to the graveyard and lay the  
sod o'er me,

For I'm a poor cowboy and I know  
I've done wrong.

"It was once in the saddle I used to go  
dashing,

It was once in the saddle I used to go  
gay.

'Twas first to drinking and then to  
card playing,

Got shot in the breast, I am dying  
today.

"Get six jolly cowboys to carry my  
coffin,

Get six pretty girls to carry my pall;  
Put bunches of roses all over my  
coffin,

Put roses to deaden the clods as  
they fall.

"O beat the drum slowly and play  
the fife lowly

And play the dead march as you carry  
me along,

Take me to the green valley and lay  
the sod o'er me,

For I'm a young cowboy and I know  
I've done wrong."

We beat the drum slowly and played  
the fife lowly,

And bitterly wept as we bore him  
along;

For we all loved our comrade, so  
brave, young, and handsome,

We all loved our comrade although  
he'd done wrong.

# Skipper Ireson's Ride

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Of all the rides since the birth of time,  
Told in story or sung in rhyme, —  
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,  
Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,  
Witch astride of a human back,  
Islam's prophet on Al-Borak, —

The strangest ride that ever was sped  
Was Ireson's out from Marblehead!

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried  
in a cart

By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,  
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,  
Feathered and ruffled in every part,  
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.

Scores of women, old and young,  
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,  
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,  
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd  
horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a  
corr't

By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,  
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,  
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase  
Bacchus round some antique vase,  
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,  
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,  
With conch-shells blowing and fish-  
horns' twang,

Over and over the Maenads sang:

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd  
horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a  
corr't

By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him! — He sailed away  
From a leaking ship in Chaleur  
Bay, —

Sailed away from a sinking wreck,  
With his own town's-people on her  
deck.

"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.  
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!  
Brag of your catch of fish again!"  
And off he sailed through the fog and  
rain!

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in  
a cart

By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur  
That wreck shall lie forevermore.  
Mother and sister, wife and maid,  
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead  
Over the moaning and rainy sea, —  
Looked for the coming that might not  
be!

What did the winds and the sea-birds  
say

Of the cruel captain who sailed  
away? —

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried  
in a cart

By the women of Marblehead!



Through the street, on either side,  
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;  
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives  
gray,

Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.  
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,  
Hulks of old sailors run aground,  
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and  
cane,

And cracked with curses the hoarse  
refrain:

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd  
horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a  
corr't

By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road  
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.  
Little the wicked skipper knew  
Of the fields so green and the sky so  
blue.

Riding there in his sorry trim,  
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,  
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear  
Of voices shouting, far and near:

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd  
horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a  
corr't

By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he  
cried, —

"What to me is this noisy ride?

What is the shame that clothes the  
skin

To the nameless horror that lives  
within?

Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,  
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!  
Hate me and curse me, — I only dread  
The hand of God and the face of the  
dead!"

Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard  
heart

Tarred and feathered and carried  
in a cart

By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at  
sea

Said, "God has touched him! why  
should we!"

Said an old wife mourning an only  
son,

"Cut the rogue's tether and let him  
run!"

So with soft relentings and rude ex-  
cuse,

Half scorn, half pity, they cut him  
loose,

And gave him a cloak to hide him in  
And left him alone with his shame  
and sin.

Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried  
in a cart

By the women of Marblehead!

## La Belle Dame sans Merci

JOHN KEATS

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 Alone and palely loitering?  
 The sedge is withered from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 So haggard and so woe-begone?  
 The squirrel's granary is full,  
 And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow  
 With anguish moist and fever dew,  
 And on thy cheek a fading rose  
 Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,  
 Full beautiful, a faery's child:  
 Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
 And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
 And nothing else saw all day long;  
 For sideways would she lean, and sing  
 A faery's song.

I made a garland for her head,  
 And bracelets too, and fragrant  
 zone;

She looked at me as she did love,  
 And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
 And honey wild, and manna dew,

And sure in language strange she said,  
 "I love thee true!"

She took me to her elfin grot,  
 And there she gazed and sighed  
 deep,  
 And there I shut her wild, sad eyes —  
 So kissed to sleep.

And there we slumbered on the moss,  
 And there I dreamed, ah! woe be-  
 tide,  
 The latest dream I ever dreamed  
 On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,  
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they  
 all;

Who cried — "La belle Dame sans  
 merci  
 Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,  
 With horrid warning gaped wide,  
 And I awoke and found me here,  
 On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here,  
 Alone and palely loitering,  
 Though the sedge is withered from  
 the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

# The Haystack in the Floods

WILLIAM MORRIS

Had she come all the way for this,  
To part at last without a kiss?  
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain  
That her own eyes might see him slain  
Beside the haystack in the floods?  
Along the dripping leafless woods,  
The stirrup touching either shoe,  
She rode astride as troopers do;  
With kirtle kilted to her knee,  
To which the mud splashed wretchedly.

And the wet dripped from every tree  
Upon her head and heavy hair,  
And on her eyelids broad and fair;  
The tears and rain ran down her face.  
By fits and starts they rode apace,  
And very often was his place  
Far off from her: he had to ride  
Ahead, to see what might betide  
When the roads crossed; and sometimes, when

There rose a murmuring from his men,

Had to turn back with promises.  
Ah me! she had but little ease;  
And often for pure doubt and dread  
She sobbed, made giddy in the head  
By the swift riding; while, for cold,  
Her slender fingers scarce could hold  
The wet reins; yea, and scarcely, too,  
She felt the foot within her shoe  
Against the stirrup. All for this:  
To part at last without a kiss  
Beside the haystack in the floods.  
For when they neared that old soaked hay,  
They saw, across the only way,

That Judas, Godmar; and the three  
Red running lions dismally  
Grinned from his pennon, under which  
In one straight line along the ditch,  
They counted thirty heads.

So then,  
While Robert turned round to his men,  
She saw at once the wretched end,  
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend  
Her coif the wrong way from her head,  
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:  
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one;  
At Poitiers where we made them run  
So fast — Why, sweet my love, good cheer,  
The Gascon frontier is so near,  
Nought after this."

But, "O," she said,  
"My God! my God! I have to tread  
The long way back without you; then  
The court at Paris; those six men;  
The gratings of the Chatelet,  
The swift Seine on some rainy day  
Like this, and people standing by  
And laughing, while my weak hands try  
To recollect how strong men swim.  
All this, or else a life with him,  
For which I should be damned at last:  
Would God that this next hour were past!"  
He answered not, but cried his cry,  
"St. George for Marny!" cheerily;

And laid his hand upon her rein.  
 Alas! no man of all his train  
 Gave back that cheery cry again;  
 And, while for rage his thumb beat  
     fast  
 Upon his sword-hilt, some one cast  
 About his neck a kerchief long,  
 And bound him.

Then they went along  
 To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,

Your lover's life is on the wane  
 So fast that, if this very hour  
 You yield not as my paramour,  
 He will not see the rain leave off —  
 Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and  
     scoff,  
 Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,  
 Then gazed upon the palm, as though  
 She thought her forehead bled, and —  
     "No!"

She said, and turned her head away,  
 As there were nothing else to say,  
 And everything were settled. Red  
 Grew Godmar's face from chin to  
     head:

"Jehane, on yonder hill there stands  
 My castle, guarding well my lands:  
 What hinders me from taking you,  
 And doing that I list to do  
 To your fair willful body, while  
 Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile  
 Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,  
 A long way out she thrust her chin:  
 "You know that I should strangle you  
 While you were sleeping; or bite  
     through  
 Your throat, by God's help — ah!"  
     she said,

"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!  
 For in such wise they hem me in,  
 I cannot choose but sin and sin,  
 Whatever happens: yet I think  
 They could not make me eat or drink,  
 And so should I just reach my rest."  
 "Nay, if you do not my behest,  
 O Jehane! though I love you well,"  
 Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell  
 All that I know?" "Foul lies," she  
     said.

"Eh! lies, my Jehane? by God's head,  
 At Paris folks would deem them true!  
 Do you know, Jehane, they cry for  
     you:

'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!  
 Give us Jehane to burn or drown!'  
 Eh — gag me, Robert! — sweet my  
     friend,

This were indeed a piteous end  
 For those long fingers, and long feet,  
 And long neck, and smooth shoulders  
     sweet;

An end that few men would forget  
 That saw it — So, an hour yet:  
 Consider, Jehane, which to take  
 Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,  
 Dismounting, did she leave that place,  
 And totter some yards: with her  
     face

Turned upward to the sky she lay,  
 Her head on a wet heap of hay,  
 And fell asleep. And while she slept,  
 And did not dream, the minutes crept  
 Round to the twelve again; but she,  
 Being waked at last, sighed quietly,  
 And strangely childlike came, and  
     said:

"I will not." Straightway Godmar's  
     head,

As though it hung on strong wires,  
turned  
Most sharply round, and his face  
burned.

For Robert — both his eyes were dry,  
He could not weep, but gloomily  
He seemed to watch the rain; yea,  
too,

His lips were firm. He tried once more  
To touch her lips; she reached out, sore  
And vain desire so tortured them,  
The poor gray lips, and now the hem  
Of his sleeve brushed them.

With a start  
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;  
From Robert's throat he loosed the  
bands  
Of silk and mail. With empty hands  
Held out, she stood and gazed, and  
saw  
The long bright blade without a flaw  
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his  
hand

In Robert's hair; she saw him bend  
Back Robert's head; she saw him send  
The thin steel down. The blow told  
well:

Right backward the knight Robert  
fell,

And moaned as dogs do, being half  
dead,

Unwitting, as I deem. So then  
Godmar turned grinning to his men,  
Who ran, some five or six, and beat  
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turned again and  
said:

"So, Jehane, the first fitte is read!  
Take note, my lady, that your way  
Lies backward to the Chatelet!"  
She shook her head and gazed awhile  
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,  
As though this thing had made her  
mad.

This was the parting that they had  
Beside the haystack in the floods.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What Revolution was responsible for the death of John Henry?
2. What caused the death of Sir John Graeme?
3. What made the husband speak in "Get Up and Bar the Door"?
4. After the boll weevil comes, what is going to happen to the merchant? the doctor? the preacher?
5. Mention some other American ballads. What might they tell foreigners about America?
6. Compare "La Belle Dame sans Merci," a literary ballad, to the genuine folk ballad ("John Henry," "Bonny Barbara Allan," etc.). In what ways is it like them? in what ways different?
7. How is the narrative flashback used in "Skipper Ireson's Ride"?
8. Why didn't Robert and his train fight Godmar and his followers?

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

*William Shakespeare was the third in a family of eight children, the eldest son of a prosperous businessman. After leaving his home town of Stratford, he made a fortune by his plays in London. His lyrics were important to his plays, being designed to offer the audience musical entertainment to meet the competition of plays put on by trained boy choirs, such as the Children of the Chapel Royal. His Sonnets, published in 1609 and dedicated to a mysterious "Mr. W. H.," served to enhance his prestige as a poet. Sonnets 1-126 describe Shakespeare's friendship with this young man, their misunderstandings, reconciliations, Shakespeare's urging him to marry and promising him immortality from these poems, etc. Sonnets 127-152 are addressed to an equally mysterious "dark lady" whom Shakespeare apparently disliked but couldn't help passionately loving.*

## Lyrics

From *Love's Labour's Lost*

When icicles hang by the wall,  
 And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
 And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
 And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
 When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,  
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
Tu-who;
 Tu-whit, tu-who — a merry note,  
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
 And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
 And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
 And Marian's nose looks red and raw,  
 When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,  
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
Tu-who;
 Tu-whit, tu-who — a merry note,  
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

From *Two Gentlemen of Verona*

Who is Silvia? what is she?  
 That all our swains commend her?  
 Holy, fair, and wise is she;  
 The heaven such grace did lend her,  
 That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?  
 For beauty lives with kindness:  
 Love doth to her eyes repair,  
 To help him of his blindness;  
 And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,  
 That Silvia is excelling;  
 She excels each mortal thing  
 Upon the dull earth dwelling;  
 To her let us garlands bring.

*From As You Like It*

Under the greenwood tree  
 Who loves to lie with me,  
 And turn his merry note  
 Unto the sweet bird's throat,  
 Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
       Here shall he see  
       No enemy  
 But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,  
 And loves to live i' the sun,  
 Seeking the food he eats,  
 And pleas'd with what he gets,  
 Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
       Here shall he see  
       No enemy  
 But winter and rough weather.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
 Thou art not so unkind  
   As man's ingratitude;  
 Thy tooth is not so keen,  
 Because thou art not seen,  
   Although thy breath be rude.  
 Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:  
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.  
 Then heigh-ho! the holly!  
   This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
 That dost not bite so nigh  
     As benefits forgot:  
 Though thou the waters warp,  
 Thy sting is not so sharp  
     As friend remember'd not.  
 Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:  
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.  
     Then heigh-ho! the holly!  
     This life is most jolly.

*From Twelfth Night*

O mistress mine! where are you roaming?  
 O! stay and hear; your true love's coming,  
     That can sing both high and low.  
 Trip no further, pretty sweeting;  
 Journeys end in lovers meeting,  
     Every wise man's son doth know.  
  
 What is love? 'tis not hereafter;  
 Present mirth hath present laughter;  
     What's to come is still unsure:  
 In delay there lies no plenty;  
 Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,  
     Youth's a stuff will not endure.

*From Measure for Measure*

Take, O take those lips away,  
     That so sweetly were forsworn;  
 And those eyes, the break of day,  
     Lights that do mislead the morn:  
 But my kisses bring again, bring again,  
 Seals of love, but seal'd in vain, seal'd in vain.

*From Cymbeline*

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,  
     And Phoebus 'gins arise,  
 His steeds to water at those springs  
     On chalic'd flowers that lies;



And winking Mary-buds begin  
 To ope their golden eyes:  
 With every thing that pretty is,  
 My lady sweet, arise:  
 Arise, arise!

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,  
 Nor the furious winter's rages;  
 Thou thy worldly task hast done,  
 Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages;  
 Golden lads and girls all must,  
 As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.  
 Fear no more the frown o' the great,  
 Thou art past the tyrant's stroke:  
 Care no more to clothe and eat;  
 To thee the reed is as the oak:  
 The sceptre, learning, physic, must  
 All follow this, and come to dust.  
 Fear no more the lightning-flash,  
 Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;  
 Fear not slander, censure rash;  
 Thou hast finish'd joy and moan:  
 All lovers young, all lovers must  
 Consign to thee, and come to dust.  
 No exorciser harm thee!  
 Nor no witchcraft charm thee!  
 Ghost unlaid forbear thee!  
 Nothing ill come near thee!  
 Quiet consummation have;  
 And renowned be thy grave!

*From The Tempest*

Full fathom five thy father lies;  
 Of his bones are coral made:  
 Those are pearls that were his eyes:  
 Nothing of him that doth fade,  
 But doth suffer a sea-change  
 Into something rich and strange.  
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:

[*Burden*: ding-dong.

Hark! now I hear them, — ding-dong, bell.

Where the bee sucks, there suck I  
 In a cowslip's bell I lie;  
 There I couch when owls do cry.  
 On the bat's back I do fly  
 After summer merrily:  
 Merrily, merrily shall I live now  
 Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

## Sonnets

### XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
 By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd;  
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,  
 Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;  
     So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
     So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

### XXIX

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes  
 I all alone beweepe my outcast state,  
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate,  
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,  
 Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,  
 With what I most enjoy contented least;  
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
 Haply I think on thee, — and then my state,  
 Like to the lark at break of day arising  
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
     For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings  
     That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

## XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
 I summon up remembrance of things past,  
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:  
 Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,  
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
 And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,  
 And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:  
 Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,  
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,  
 Which I new pay as if not paid before.

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
 All losses are restor'd and sorrows end.

## LVII

Being your slave, what should I do but tend  
 Upon the hours and times of your desire?  
 I have no precious time at all to spend,  
 Nor services to do, till you require.  
 Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour  
 Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,  
 Nor think the bitterness of absence sour  
 When you have bid your servant once adieu;  
 Nor dare I question with my jealous thought  
 Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,  
 But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought  
 Save where you are how happy you make those.

So true a fool is love that in your will,  
 Though you do anything, he thinks no ill.

## LXXIII

That time of year thou mayst in me behold  
 When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
 Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
 Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  
 In me thou see'st the twilight of such day  
 As after sunset fadeth in the west;  
 Which by and by black night doth take away,  
 Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.

In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,  
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
 As the death-bed whereon it must expire  
 Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.  
 This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,  
 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

## XC

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;  
 Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,  
 Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,  
 And do not drop in for an after-loss:  
 Ah! do not, when my heart hath 'scap'd this sorrow,  
 Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe;  
 Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,  
 To linger out a purpos'd overthrow.  
 If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,  
 When other petty griefs have done their spite,  
 But in the onset come: so shall I taste  
 At first the very worst of fortune's might;  
 And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,  
 Compar'd with loss of thee will not seem so.

## XCVII

How like a winter hath my absence been  
 From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!  
 What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!  
 What old December's bareness everywhere!  
 And yet this time remov'd was summer's time;  
 The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,  
 Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,  
 Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:  
 Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me  
 But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;  
 For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
 And, thou away, the very birds are mute:  
 Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,  
 That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

## CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love  
 Which alters when it alteration finds,

Or bends with the remover to remove:  
 O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,  
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
 It is the star to every wandering bark,  
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
 Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
     If this be error, and upon me prov'd,  
     I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

## CXLIV

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,  
 Which like two spirits do suggest me still:  
 The better angel is a man right fair,  
 The worser spirit a woman, colour'd ill.  
 To win me soon to hell, my female evil  
 Tempteth my better angel from my side,  
 And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,  
 Wooing his purity with her foul pride.  
 And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend  
 Suspect I may, but not directly tell;  
 But being both from me, both to each friend,  
 I guess one angel in another's hell:  
     Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,  
     Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

## QUESTIONS

1. Make a list of the subjects of Shakespeare's lyrics. How do they compare with the lyrics in contemporary musicals?
2. State in a single sentence the idea of each of Shakespeare's sonnets.
3. What are many of Shakespeare's figures of speech taken from (i.e., to what does he compare his love, his unhappiness, "man's ingratitude," etc.)? Find some examples.

## JOHN KEATS

*John Keats had the shortest and most tragic life of any of the great nineteenth century English poets. He studied to be a surgeon, then turned to poetry; but after a strenuous hiking trip to Scotland his health failed—his family was prone to tuberculosis—and he died in 1821, at the age of twenty-six. By that time he had written “The Eve of St. Agnes” (which he called “a little poem”), his great odes and sonnets, and other masterpieces, reflective or narrative. The death of a favorite brother, Keats’s own illness, and his hopeless love for Fanny Brawne, are all reflected in the contrast of human misery with the beauty of the bird’s song in “Ode to a Nightingale.” On his grave in Rome is carved the epitaph he himself composed: “Here lies one whose name was writ in water.”*

## The Eve of St. Agnes

St. Agnes’ Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!  
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
 The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,  
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
 Numb were the Beadsman’s fingers while he told  
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
 Like pious incense from a censer old,  
 Seemed taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
 Past the sweet Virgin’s picture, while his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;  
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,  
 And back returneth, meager, barefoot, wan,  
 Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:  
 The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to freeze,  
 Imprisoned in black, purgatorial rails:  
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat’ries,  
 He passeth by, and his weak spirit fails  
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
 And scarce three steps, ere Music’s golden tongue  
 Flattered to tears this aged man and poor;  
 But no — already had his death-bell rung:  
 The joys of all his life were said and sung;  
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes’ Eve:  
 Another way he went, and soon among  
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul’s reprieve,  
 And all night kept awake, for sinners’ sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;  
 And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,

From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
 The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:  
 The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
 Were glowing to receive a thousand guests.  
 The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
 Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
 With hair blown back, and wings put crosswise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
 Numerous as shadows haunting faerily  
 The brain new-stuffed, in youth, with triumphs gay  
 Of old romance. These let us wish away,  
 And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,  
 Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,  
 On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,  
 As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
 Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
 And soft adorings from their loves receive  
 Upon the honeyed middle of the night,  
 If ceremonies due they did aright;  
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
 And couch supine their beauties, lily white;  
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
 Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:  
 The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
 She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,  
 Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train  
 Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain  
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,  
 And back retired; not cooled by high disdain,  
 But she saw not: her heart was elsewhere;  
 She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,  
 Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:  
 The hallowed hour was near at hand: she sighs  
 Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort  
 Of whisperers in anger or in sport;  
 'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,

Hoodwinked with faery fancy; all amorn,  
 Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,  
 And all the bliss to be before tomorrow morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
 She lingered still. Meantime, across the moors,  
 Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire  
 For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
 Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and implores  
 All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
 But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
 That he might gaze and worship all unseen;  
 Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in sooth such things have been.

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell,  
 All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
 Will storm his heart, Love's feverous citadel:  
 For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,  
 Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
 Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
 Against his lineage; not one breast affords  
 Him any mercy in that mansion foul,  
 Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature came,  
 Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
 To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,  
 Behind a broad hall pillar, far beyond  
 The sound of merriment and chorus bland.  
 He startled her: but soon she knew his face,  
 And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,  
 Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;  
 They are all here tonight, the whole blood-thirsty race!

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand:  
 He had a fever late, and in the fit  
 He cursed thee and thine, both house and land:  
 Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit  
 More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me! flit!  
 Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip dear,  
 We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,  
 And tell me how —" "Good saints! not here, not here!  
 Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."



He followed through a lowly arched way,  
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;  
 And as she muttered "Well-a — well-a-day!"  
 He found him in a little moonlight room,  
 Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
 "Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,  
 "O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom  
 Which none but secret sisterhood may see,  
 When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —  
 Yet men will murder upon holy days.  
 Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,  
 And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays  
 To venture so: it fills me with amaze  
 To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!  
 God's help! my lady fair the conjurer plays  
 This very night: good angels her deceive!  
 But let me laugh awhile, — I've mickle time to grieve."

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,  
 While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
 Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
 Who keepeth closed a wondrous riddle-book,  
 As spectacted she sits in chimney nook.  
 But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told  
 His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook  
 Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,  
 And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,  
 Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart  
 Made purple riot: then doth he propose  
 A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:  
 "A cruel man and impious thou art!  
 Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep and dream  
 Alone with her good angels, far apart  
 From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I deem  
 Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear!"  
 Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find grace  
 When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,  
 If one of her soft ringlets I displace,

Or look with ruffian passion in her face.  
 Good Angela, believe me, by these tears;  
 Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
 Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,  
 And beard them, though they be more fanged than wolves and bears."

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?  
 A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,  
 Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;  
 Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,  
 Were never missed." Thus plaining, doth she bring  
 A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;  
 So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
 That Angela gives promise she will do  
 Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,  
 Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide  
 Him in a closet, of such privacy  
 That he might see her beauty unespied,  
 And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,  
 While legioned fairies paced the coverlet,  
 And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.  
 Never on such a night have lovers met,  
 Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:  
 "All cates and dainties shall be stored there  
 Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame  
 Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,  
 For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare  
 On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
 Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer  
 The while. Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,  
 Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

So saying she hobbled off with busy fear.  
 The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;  
 The Dame returned, and whispered in his ear  
 To follow her; with aged eyes aghast  
 From fright of dim espial. Safe at last  
 Through many a dusky gallery, they gain  
 The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed and chaste;  
 Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.  
 His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade,  
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
 When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,  
 Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:  
 With silver taper's light, and pious care,  
 She turned, and down the aged gossip led  
 To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;  
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove frayed and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;  
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:  
 She closed the door, she panted, all akin  
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:  
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!  
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side;  
 As though a tongueless nightingale should swell  
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arched there was,  
 All garlanded with carven imageries,  
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,  
 And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings;  
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
 A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
 And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;  
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,  
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint:  
 She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,  
 Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew faint:  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,  
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;  
 Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;  
 Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees

Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:  
 Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,  
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,  
 In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,  
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,  
 Until the poppiest warmth of sleep oppressed  
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;  
 Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;  
 Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;  
 Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims pray;  
 Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
 As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

Stolen to this paradise, and so entranced,  
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
 And listened to her breathing, if it chanced  
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness;  
 Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,  
 And breathed himself: then from the closet crept,  
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,  
 And over the hushed carpet, silent, stept,  
 And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo! — how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon  
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
 A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon  
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —  
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!  
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarinet,  
 Affray his ears, though but in dying tone: —  
 The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
 In blanched linen, smooth, and lavendered,  
 While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;  
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferred  
 From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

These delicacies he heaped with glowing hand  
 On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
 Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand  
 In the retired quiet of the night,  
 Filling the chilly room with perfume light. —  
 “And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!  
 Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:  
 Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes’ sake,  
 Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.”

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm  
 Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream  
 By the dusk curtains: — ’twas a midnight charm  
 Impossible to melt as iced stream:  
 The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;  
 Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:  
 It seemed he never, never could redeem  
 From such a stedfast spell his lady’s eyes;  
 So mused awhile, entailed in woofed phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —  
 Tumultuous, — and, in chords that tenderest be,  
 He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,  
 In Provence called, “La belle dame sans mercy:”  
 Close to her ear touching the melody; —  
 Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft moan:  
 He ceased — she panted quick — and suddenly  
 Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:  
 Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
 Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:  
 There was a painful change, that night expelled  
 The blisses of her dream so pure and deep  
 At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
 And moan forth witless words with many a sigh,  
 While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;  
 Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,  
 Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly.

“Ah, Porphyro!” said she, “but even now  
 Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
 Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;  
 And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:

How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!  
 Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
 Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!  
 Oh, leave me not in this eternal woe,  
 For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far  
 At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
 Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star  
 Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;  
 Into her dream he melted, as the rose  
 Blendeth its odor with the violet, —  
 Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows  
 Like Love's alarum, pattering the sharp sleet  
 Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet.  
 "This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"  
 'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:  
 "No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!  
 Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.  
 Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?  
 I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
 Though thou forsakest a deceived thing; —  
 A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!  
 Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?  
 Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and vermeil-dyed?  
 Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
 After so many hours of toil and quest,  
 A famished pilgrim, — saved by miracle.  
 Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest,  
 Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well  
 To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,  
 Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:  
 Arise — arise! the morning is at hand; —  
 The bloated wassailers will never heed; —  
 Let us away, my love, with happy speed;  
 There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —  
 Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:  
 Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,  
 For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
 For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
 At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears —  
 Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found;  
 In all the house was heard no human sound.  
 A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;  
 The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
 Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;  
 And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.  
 They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;  
 Like phantoms, to the iron porch they glide,  
 Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
 With a huge empty flagon by his side:  
 The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
 But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:  
 By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide: —  
 The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;  
 The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.  
 And they are gone: aye, ages long ago  
 These lovers fled away into the storm.  
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
 And all his warrior-guests with shade and form  
 Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
 Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old  
 Died palsy-twitched, with meager face deform;  
 The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
 For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

## Ode on a Grecian Urn

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,  
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:  
 What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape  
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
 What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?  
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
     Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,  
     Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
     Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
     Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
 Though winning near the goal — yet, do not grieve;  
     She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
     For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
     Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
     For ever piping songs for ever new;  
 More happy love! more happy, happy love!  
     For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,  
     For ever panting and for ever young;  
 All breathing human passion far above,  
     That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,  
     A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
     To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
     And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?  
 What little town by river or sea-shore,  
     Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
     Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?  
 And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
     Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
     Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede  
     Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;  
     Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought  
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!  
     When old age shall this generation waste,  
     Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
     Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,  
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty, — that is all  
     Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."



## Ode to a Nightingale

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:  
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
 But being too happy in thy happiness, —  
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
 In some melodious plot  
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been  
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,  
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!  
 O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
 And purple-stained mouth;  
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;  
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;  
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
 And leaden-eyed despairs;  
 Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
 Or new love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:  
 Already with thee! tender is the night,  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
 Clustered around by all her starry fays;

But here there is no light,  
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet  
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;  
 Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;  
 And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,  
 Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath;  
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
 In such an ecstasy!  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain —  
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee down;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!  
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades  
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music: — do I wake or sleep?

## To Autumn

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
   With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
 To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,  
   And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
   To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
   With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
 Until they think warm days will never cease,  
   For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
   Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;  
 Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,  
   Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
   Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers;  
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
   Steady thy laden head across a brook;  
   Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
   Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?  
   Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, —  
 While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
   And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;  
 Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn  
   Among the river shallows, borne aloft  
   Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;  
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;  
   Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft  
   The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,  
   And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

## On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;  
Round many eastern islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific — and all his men  
Looked at each other with a wild surmise —  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

## When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be

When I have fears that I may cease to be  
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,  
Before high-piled books, in charactery,  
Hold like rich garnerers the full ripened grain;  
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,  
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And think that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;  
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,  
That I shall never look upon thee more,  
Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love; — then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think  
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

## Bright Star, Would I Were Steadfast as Thou Art —

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art —  
 Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night  
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
 Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,  
 The moving waters at their priestlike task  
 Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
 Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask  
 Of snow upon the mountains and the moors —  
 No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,  
 Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
 To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,  
 Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
 Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
 And so live ever — or else swoon to death.

### QUESTIONS

1. What legend about St. Agnes' Eve is Madeline thinking of as she retires?
2. Why did Angela help Porphyro? Is this motivation adequate?
3. What character in "The Eve of St. Agnes" serves more for decoration than for plot?
4. What consolation has the lover who is depicted on the Grecian urn?
5. What two things in the Odes suggest the eternity of Beauty to Keats?
6. Find several descriptive details in "To Autumn" which you can verify from experience.
7. Compare the meter and rhyme scheme of Keats's Odes with that of the sonnet.

## ROBERT BROWNING

*Robert Browning won poetic fame much more slowly than his wife did. His early poetry was considered too difficult, and only after he had carried Elizabeth Barrett off to Italy did he gain more readers, with Men and Women (1855), Dramatis Personae (1864), and The Ring and the Book (1868-69 — about an Italian murder). These poems show his interest in such subjects as the Italian Renaissance and its people, the psychology of love, good and evil, and man's immortality. "The whole poet's function," he said, is one "of beholding with an understanding and keenness the universe, nature and man, in their actual state of perfection and imperfection."*

## My Last Duchess

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
 Looking as if she were alive. I call  
 That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands  
 Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
 Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
 "Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read  
 Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
 The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
 But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
 And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
 How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
 Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
 Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
 Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps  
 Over my Lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
 Half-flush that dies along her throat"; such stuff  
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
 A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made glad,  
 Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er  
 She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
 Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,  
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
 The bough of cherries some officious fool  
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
 She rode with round the terrace — all and each  
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,

Or blush, at least. She thanked men, — good; but thanked  
 Somehow — I know not how — as if she ranked  
 My gift of a nine-hundred-years'-old name  
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
 In speech — (which I have not) — to make your will  
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this  
 Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
 Or there exceed the mark" — and if she let  
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
 — E'en then would be some stooping, and I choose  
 Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
 Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
 The company below, then. I repeat,  
 The Count your master's known munificence  
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
 Together down, sir! Notice Neptune, though,  
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

## Meeting at Night

The grey sea and the long black land;  
 And the yellow half-moon large and low;  
 And the startled little waves that leap  
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,  
 As I gain the cove with pushing prow,  
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;  
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears;  
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch  
 And blue spurt of a lighted match,  
 And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,  
 Than the two hearts beating each to each!

## The Last Ride Together

I said — Then, dearest, since 'tis so,  
 Since now at length my fate I know,  
 Since nothing all my love avails,  
 Since all my life seemed meant for, fails,  
     Since this was written and needs must be —  
 My whole heart rises up to bless  
 Your name in pride and thankfulness!  
 Take back the hope you gave, — I claim  
 Only a memory of the same,  
 — And this beside, if you will not blame,  
     Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;  
 Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs  
 When pity would be softening through,  
 Fixed me a breathing-while or two  
     With life or death in the balance: right!  
 The blood replenished me again;  
 My last thought was at least not vain:  
 I and my mistress, side by side  
 Shall be together, breathe and ride,  
 So, one day more am I deified.  
     Who knows but the world may end tonight?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
 All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed  
 By many benedictions — sun's  
 And moon's and evening-star's at once —  
     And so, you, looking and loving best,  
 Conscious grew, your passion drew  
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
 Down on you, near and yet more near,  
 Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! —  
 Thus leant she and lingered — joy and fear!  
     Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul  
 Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll  
 Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
 Past hopes already lay behind.  
     What need to strive with a life awry?



Had I said that, had I done this,  
 So might I gain, so might I miss.  
 Might she have loved me? just as well  
 She might have hated, who can tell!  
 Where had I been now if the worst befell?  
 And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?  
 Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?  
 We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,  
 Saw other regions, cities new,  
 As the world rushed by on either side.  
 I thought, — All labor, yet no less  
 Bear up beneath their unsuccess.  
 Look at the end of work, contrast  
 The petty done, the undone vast,  
 This present of theirs with the hopeful past!  
 I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?  
 What heart alike conceived and dared?  
 What act proved all its thought had been?  
 What will but felt the fleshly screen?  
 We ride and I see her bosom heave.  
 There's many a crown for who can reach.  
 Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!  
 The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
 A soldier's doing! what atones?  
 They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.  
 My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,  
 Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell  
 What we felt only; you expressed  
 You hold things beautiful the best,  
 And place them in rhyme so, side by side.  
 'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,  
 Have you yourself what's best for men?  
 Are you — poor, sick, old ere your time —  
 Nearer one whit your own sublime  
 Than we who never have turned a rhyme?  
 Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor — so, you gave  
 A score of years to Art, her slave,  
 And that's your Venus, whence we turn  
 To yonder girl that fords the burn!

You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
 What, man of music, you grown gray  
 With notes and nothing else to say,  
 Is this your sole praise from a friend,  
 "Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
 But in music we know how fashions end!"

I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate  
 Proposed bliss here should sublimate  
 My being — had I signed the bond —  
 Still one must lead some life beyond,

Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.  
 This foot once planted on the goal,  
 This glory-garland round my soul,  
 Could I descry such? Try and test!  
 I sink back shuddering from the quest.  
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?

Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet — she has not spoke so long!  
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
 At life's best, with our eyes upturned  
 Whither life's flower is first discerned,

We, fixed so, ever should so abide?  
 What if we still ride on, we two,  
 With life forever old yet new,  
 Changed not in kind but in degree,  
 The instant made eternity, —

And heaven just prove that I and she

Ride, ride together, forever ride?

## Count Gismond

AIX IN PROVENCE

Christ God who savest man, save most  
 Of men Count Gismond who saved me!  
 Count Gauthier, when he chose his post,  
 Chose time and place and company  
 To suit it; when he struck at length  
 My honor, 't was with all his strength.

And doubtlessly ere he could draw  
 All points to one, he must have schemed!  
 That miserable morning saw  
 Few half so happy as I seemed,  
 While being dressed in queen's array  
 To give our tourney prize away.

I thought they loved me, did me grace  
 To please themselves; 't was all their deed;  
 God makes, or fair or foul, our face;  
 If showing mine so caused to bleed  
 My cousins' hearts, they should have dropped  
 A word, and straight the play had stopped.

They, too, so beauteous! Each a queen  
 By virtue of her brow and breast;  
 Not needing to be crowned, I mean,  
 As I do. E'en when I was dressed,  
 Had either of them spoke, instead  
 Of glancing sideways with still head!

But no: they let me laugh, and sing  
 My birthday song quite through, adjust  
 The last rose in my garland, fling  
 A last look on the mirror, trust  
 My arms to each an arm of theirs,  
 And so descend the castle-stairs —

And come out on the morning-troop  
 Of merry friends who kissed my cheek,  
 And called me queen, and made me stoop  
 Under the canopy — (a streak  
 That pierced it, of the outside sun,  
 Powdered with gold its gloom's soft dun) —

And they could let me take my state  
 And foolish throne amid applause  
 Of all come there to celebrate  
 My queen's-day — Oh I think the cause  
 Of much was, they forgot no crowd  
 Makes up for parents in their shroud!

Howe'er that be, all eyes were bent  
 Upon me, when my cousins cast  
 Theirs down; 't was time I should present  
 The victor's crown, but . . . there, 't will last  
 No long time . . . the old mist again  
 Blinds me as then it did. How vain!

See! Gismond's at the gate, in talk  
 With his two boys: I can proceed.  
 Well, at that moment, who should stalk  
 Forth boldly — to my face, indeed —  
 But Gauthier, and he thundered, "Stay!"  
 And all stayed. "Bring no crowns, I say!

"Bring torches! Wind the penance-sheet  
 About her! Let her shun the chaste,  
 Or lay herself before their feet!  
 Shall she whose body I embraced  
 A night long, queen it in the day?  
 For honor's sake no crowns, I say!"

I? What I answered? As I live,  
 I never fancied such a thing  
 As answer possible to give.  
 What says the body when they spring  
 Some monstrous torture-engine's whole  
 Strength on it? No more says the soul.

Till out strode Gismond; then I knew  
 That I was saved. I never met  
 His face before, but, at first view,  
 I felt quite sure that God had set  
 Himself to Satan; who would spend  
 A minute's mistrust on the end?

He strode to Gauthier, in his throat  
 Gave him the lie, then struck his mouth  
 With one back-handed blow that wrote

In blood men's verdict there. North, South,  
East, West, I looked. The lie was dead,  
And damned, and truth stood up instead.

This glads me most, that I enjoyed  
The heart of the joy, with my content  
In watching Gismond unalloyed  
By any doubt of the event:  
God took that on him — I was bid  
Watch Gismond for my part: I did.

Did I not watch him while he let  
His armorer just brace his greaves,  
Rivet his hauberk, on the fret  
The while! His foot . . . my memory leaves  
No least stamp out, nor how anon  
He pulled his ringing gauntlets on.

And e'en before the trumpet's sound  
Was finished, prone lay the false knight,  
Prone as his lie, upon the ground:  
Gismond flew at him, used no sleight  
O' the sword, but open-breasted drove,  
Cleaving till out the truth he clove.

Which done, he dragged him to my feet  
And said, "Here die, but end thy breath  
In full confession, lest thou fleet  
From my first, to God's second death!  
Say, hast thou lied?" And, "I have lied  
To God and her," he said, and died.

Then Gismond, kneeling to me, asked  
— What safe my heart holds, though no word  
Could I repeat now, if I tasked  
My powers forever, to a third  
Dear even as you are. Pass the rest  
Until I sank upon his breast.

Over my head his arm he flung  
Against the world; and scarce I felt  
His sword (that dripped by me and swung)  
A little shifted in its belt:  
For he began to say the while  
How South our home lay many a mile.

So 'mid the shouting multitude  
 We two walked forth to never more  
 Return. My cousins have pursued  
 Their life, untroubled as before  
 I vexed them. Gauthier's dwelling-place  
 God lighten! May his soul find grace!

Our elder boy has got the clear  
 Great brow; though when his brother's black  
 Full eye shows scorn, it . . . Gismond here?  
 And have you brought my tercel back?  
 I just was telling Adela  
 How many birds it struck since May.

## Prospice

Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat,  
 The mist in my face,  
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
 I am nearing the place,  
 The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
 The post of the foe;  
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
 Yet the strong man must go:  
 For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
 And the barriers fall,  
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
 The reward of it all.

I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,  
 The best and the last!  
 I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,  
 And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers  
 The heroes of old,  
 Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
 Of pain, darkness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
 The black minute's at end,  
 And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
 Shall dwindle, shall blend, .

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
 Then a light, then thy breast,  
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
 And with God be the rest!

#### QUESTIONS

1. How does the Duke in "My Last Duchess" intend to characterize himself? How does he actually do it? What is his chief character trait?
2. What details make "Meeting at Night" seem contemporary?
3. What is the philosophy of "The Last Ride Together"?
4. Why was the heroine in "Count Gismond" dishonored just as she was about to be crowned queen of the tourney? Why was there no one else to protect her?
5. To what does Browning compare death in "Prospice"?
6. Explain "For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave, The black minute's at end." What words have been left out? Find other examples of Browning's condensed, elliptical style.

### ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

*"Do you know I once wrote some poems to you?" Elizabeth Barrett Browning said to her husband Robert, one day in Italy three years after their romantic elopement. She slipped a manuscript into his coat pocket and left the room quickly, adding, "There they are if you care to see them." These turned out to be her famous Sonnets from the Portuguese (1850), which tell the story of her falling in love with Robert Browning, they have been called the finest sonnets since Shakespeare's. Robert insisted that they be published, and finally she agreed, provided publication was anonymous. Robert also suggested the title — "from the Portuguese" — since he sometimes called Elizabeth his "little Portuguese" because one of her other poems had a Portuguese heroine.*

## Sonnets from the Portuguese

### I

I thought once how Theocritus had sung  
 Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,  
 Who each one in a gracious hand appears  
 To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:  
 And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,  
 I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,  
 The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,  
 Those of my own life, who by turns had flung  
 A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,  
 So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move

Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;  
 And a voice said in mastery, while I strove, —  
 “Guess now who holds thee?” — “Death,” I said. But, there,  
 The silver answer rang, — “Not Death, but Love.”

## III

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!  
 Unlike our uses and our destinies.  
 Our ministering two angels look surprise  
 On one another, as they strike athwart  
 Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art  
 A guest for queens to social pageantries,  
 With gages from a hundred brighter eyes  
 Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part  
 Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do  
 With looking from the lattice-lights at me,  
 A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through  
 The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?  
 The chrism is on thine head, — on mine, the dew, —  
 And Death must dig the level where these agree.

## XIV

If thou must love me, let it be for nought  
 Except for love's sake only. Do not say  
 “I love her for her smile — her look — her way  
 Of speaking gently, — for a trick of thought  
 That falls in well with mine, and certes brought  
 A sense of pleasant ease on such a day” —  
 For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may  
 Be changed, or change for thee, — and love, so wrought,  
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me for  
 Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry, —  
 A creature might forget to weep, who bore  
 Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!  
 But love me for love's sake, that evermore  
 Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

## XX

Belovèd, my Belovèd, when I think  
 That thou wast in the world a year ago,  
 What time I sat alone here in the snow  
 And saw no footprint, heard the silence sink



No moment at thy voice, but, link by link,  
 Went counting all my chains as if that so  
 They never could fall off at any blow  
 Struck by thy possible hand, — why, thus I drink  
 Of life's great cup of wonder! Wonderful,  
 Never to feel thee thrill the day or night  
 With personal act or speech, — nor ever cull  
 Some prescience of thee with the blossoms white  
 Thou sawest growing! Atheists are as dull  
 Who cannot guess God's presence out of sight.

## XXII

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,  
 Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,  
 Until the lengthening wings break into fire  
 At either curvèd point, — what bitter wrong  
 Can the earth do to us, that we should not long  
 Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,  
 The angels would press on us and aspire  
 To drop some golden orb of perfect song  
 Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay  
 Rather on earth, Belovèd, — where the unfit  
 Contrarious moods of men recoil away  
 And isolate pure spirits, and permit  
 A place to stand and love in for a day,  
 With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

## XXXV

If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange  
 And be all to me? Shall I never miss  
 Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss  
 That comes to each in turn, nor count it strange,  
 When I look up, to drop on a new range  
 Of walls and floors, another home than this?  
 Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is  
 Filled by dead eyes too tender to know change?  
 That's hardest. If to conquer love, has tried,  
 To conquer grief, tries more, as all things prove;  
 For grief indeed is love and grief beside.  
 Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.  
 Yet love me — wilt thou? Open thine heart wide,  
 And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

## XXXVIII

First time he kissed me, he but only kissed  
 The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;  
 And ever since, it grew more clean and white,  
 Slow to world-greetings, quick with its "Oh, list,"  
 When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst  
 I could not wear here, plainer to my sight,  
 Than that first kiss. The second passed in height  
 The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,  
 Half falling on the hair. O beyond need!  
 That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,  
 With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.  
 The third upon my lips was folded down  
 In perfect, purple state; since when, indeed,  
 I have been proud and said, "My love, my own."

## XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
 I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
 For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
 I love thee to the level of every day's  
 Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.  
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
 I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
 I love thee with the passion put to use  
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.  
 I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
 With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,  
 Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,  
 I shall but love thee better after death.

## QUESTIONS

1. What at first surprised or troubled Elizabeth Barrett about her love affair with Robert Browning?
2. What does love replace in her life? What is "life's great cup of wonder"?
3. Which of these do you consider the most beautiful love sonnet?
4. What makes the sonnet a good form for love poetry?

## EMILY DICKINSON

*Emily Dickinson left her home in Amherst, Massachusetts, only a few times during her lifetime, and did not publish her poetry. But, as the poems appeared, after her death in 1886, she was recognized as one of America's outstanding poets. She wrote to relieve suffering, mental conflict, loneliness (she never married): "I sing as the boy does of the burying ground, because I am afraid," she said. When urged by a friend to whom she had shown some of her poems to be more orderly in her writing, she replied, "When I try to organize, my little force explodes and leaves me bare and charred."*

## How Happy Is the Little Stone

How happy is the little stone  
That rambles in the road alone,  
And doesn't care about careers,  
And exigencies never fears;  
Whose coat of elemental brown  
A passing universe put on;  
And independent as the sun,  
Associates or glows alone,  
Fulfilling absolute decree  
In casual simplicity.

## The Sky Is Low

The sky is low, the clouds are mean,  
A travelling flake of snow  
Across a barn or through a rut  
Debates if it will go.  
  
A narrow wind complains all day  
How some one treated him;  
Nature, like us, is sometimes caught  
Without her diadem.

From *Poems by Emily Dickinson*, edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Little, Brown & Company.

## There's a Certain Slant of Light

There's a certain slant of light,  
On winter afternoons,  
That oppresses, like the weight  
Of cathedral tunes.

Heavenly hurt it gives us;  
We can find no scar,  
But internal difference  
Where the meanings are.

None may teach it anything  
'Tis the seal, despair, —  
An imperial affliction  
Sent us of the air.

When it comes, the landscape listens,  
Shadows hold their breath;  
When it goes, 'tis like the distance  
On the look of death.

## The Bustle in a House

The bustle in a house  
The morning after death  
Is solemnest of industries  
Enacted upon earth, —

The sweeping up the heart,  
And putting love away  
We shall not want to use again  
Until eternity.

## He Preached upon "Breadth"

He preached upon "breadth" till it argued him narrow, —  
 The broad are too broad to define;  
 And of "truth" until it proclaimed him a liar, —  
 The truth never flaunted a sign.

Simplicity fled from his counterfeit presence  
 As gold the pyrites would shun.  
 What confusion would cover the innocent Jesus  
 To meet so enabled a man!

## I Never Saw a Moor

I never saw a moor,  
 I never saw the sea;  
 Yet know I how the heather looks,  
 And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,  
 Nor visited in heaven;  
 Yet certain am I of the spot  
 As if the chart were given.

## To Fight Aloud

To fight aloud is very brave,  
 But gallanter, I know,  
 Who charge within the bosom,  
 The cavalry of woe.

Who win, and nations do not see,  
 Who fall, and none observe,  
 Whose dying eyes no country  
 Regards with patriot love.

We trust, in plumed procession,  
 For such the angels go,  
 Rank after rank, with even feet  
 And uniforms of snow.

## The Soul Selects

The soul selects her own society,  
Then shuts the door;  
On her divine majority  
Obtrude no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariot's pausing  
At her low gate;  
Unmoved, an emperor is kneeling  
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation  
Choose one;  
Then close the valves of her attention  
Like stone.

## I Like to See It Lap the Miles

I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks;  
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid, hooting stanza;  
Then chase itself down hill

And neigh like Boanerges;  
Then, punctual as a star,  
Stop — docile and omnipotent —  
At its own stable door.

## I Died for Beauty

I died for beauty, but was scarce  
Adjusted in the tomb,  
When one who died for truth was lain  
In an adjoining room.

He questioned softly why I failed?  
"For beauty," I replied.  
"And I for truth, — the two are one;  
We brethren are," he said.

And so, as kinsmen met a night,  
We talked between the rooms,  
Until the moss had reached our lips,  
And covered up our names.

### QUESTIONS

1. Find traces of the New England landscape and character in Emily Dickinson's poems.
2. What kind of humor is in these lyrics? Why is the little stone happy? What is it that seems to "lap the miles"?
3. Find several lines which you think illustrate the inspired line (*ligne donnée*) which Spender refers to in his essay on the making of a poem.
4. On the basis of these poems, discuss Emily Dickinson's philosophy.

## A. E. HOUSMAN

*A. E. Housman, English poet and scholar, lived a retired life, during which he published only two slim volumes of verse: A Shropshire Lad (1896) and Last Poems (1922). But these few beautiful lyrics, critics agree, guarantee him immortality. After working as a clerk in a government bureau, he was appointed Professor of Latin at the University of London, and later was made Professor of Latin at Cambridge. His great scholarly work is his edition of the minor Latin poet M. Manilius (1902-32). He wrote his own poetry chiefly from inspiration ("poetry is either easy or impossible"), and insisted that poetry is "more physical than intellectual," with its source in the emotions, specifically in sensations experienced in "the pit of the stomach."*

## A Shropshire Lad

### II

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride  
Wearing white for Eastertide.

From *A Shropshire Lad* by A. E. Housman. Used by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
 Twenty will not come again,  
 And take from seventy springs a score,  
 It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom  
 Fifty springs are little room,  
 About the woodlands I will go  
 To see the cherry hung with snow.

## VIII

"Farewell to barn and stack and tree,  
 Farewell to Severn shore.  
 Terence, look your last at me,  
 For I come home no more.

"The sun burns on the half-mown hill,  
 By now the blood is dried;  
 And Maurice amongst the hay lies still  
 And my knife is in his side.

"My mother thinks us long away;  
 'Tis time the field were mown.  
 She had two sons at rising day,  
 Tonight she'll be alone.

"And here's a bloody hand to shake,  
 And, oh, man, here's good-by;  
 We'll sweat no more on scythe and rake,  
 My bloody hands and I.

"I wish you strength to bring you pride,  
 And a love to keep you clean,  
 And I wish you luck, come Lammastide,  
 At racing on the green.

"Long for me the rick will wait,  
 And long will wait the fold,  
 And long will stand the empty plate,  
 And dinner will be cold."

## XLVII

"Here the hangman stops his cart:  
 Now the best of friends must part.  
 Fare you well, for ill fare I;  
 Live, lads, and I will die.



"Oh, at home had I but stayed  
 'Prenticed to my father's trade,  
 Had I stuck to plane and adze,  
 I had not been lost, my lads.

"Then I might have built perhaps  
 Gallows-trees for other chaps,  
 Never dangled on my own,  
 Had I but left ill alone.

"Now, you see, they hang me high,  
 And the people passing by  
 Stop to shake their fists and curse;  
 So 'tis come from ill to worse.

"Here hang I, and right and left  
 Two poor fellows hang for theft:  
 All the same's the luck we prove,  
 Though the midmost hangs for love.

"Comrades all, that stand and gaze,  
 Walk henceforth in other ways;  
 See my neck and save your own:  
 Comrades all, leave ill alone.

"Make some day a decent end,  
 Shrewder fellows than your friend.  
 Fare you well, for ill fare I:  
 Live, lads, and I will die."

## LI

Loitering with a vacant eye  
 Along the Grecian gallery,  
 And brooding on my heavy ill,  
 I met a statue standing still.  
 Still in marble stone stood he,  
 And stedfastly he looked at me.  
 "Well met," I thought the look would say,  
 "We both were fashioned far away;  
 We neither knew, when we were young,  
 These Londoners we live among."

Still he stood and eyed me hard,  
 An earnest and a grave regard:  
 "What, lad, drooping with your lot?  
 I too would be where I am not.

I too survey that endless line  
 Of men whose thoughts are not as mine.  
 Years, ere you stood up from rest,  
 On my neck the collar prest;  
 Years, when you lay down your ill,  
 I shall stand and bear it still.  
 Courage, lad, 'tis not for long:  
 Stand, quit you like stone, be strong."  
 So I thought his look would say;  
 And light on me my trouble lay,  
 And I stept out in flesh and bone  
 Manful like the man of stone.

## LIV

With rue my heart is laden  
 For golden friends I had,  
 For many a rose-lipt maiden  
 And many a lightfoot lad.  
  
 By brooks too broad for leaping  
 The lightfoot boys are laid;  
 The rose-lipt girls are sleeping  
 In fields where roses fade.

## QUESTIONS

1. What qualities of the folk ballad do you find in the poem beginning "Farewell to barn and stack and tree"? Explain the situation.
2. What did the poet learn from the marble statue?
3. Discuss Housman's philosophy on the basis of these lyrics.
4. What characteristics of diction, meter, etc. give Housman's poetry its effect of simplicity?

## ROBERT FROST

*"A poem begins with a lump in the throat," says Robert Frost. "A complete poem is one where an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found the word." Frost studied at Dartmouth and Harvard, farmed in New Hampshire and England. Since the appearance of A Boy's Will (1913) and North of Boston (1914), published when he was in his late thirties, he has been in the front rank of American poets. He has taught at Amherst, Dartmouth, Wesleyan, and Michigan (where he was awarded a life fellowship in poetry), and was elected to the board of overseers of Harvard College. In his poetry of rural New England he has emphasized "tones of voice . . . certain brute throat noises . . . that no one could miss . . . in my sentences."*

## Mending Wall

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
 That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
 And spills the upper boulders in the sun;  
 And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.  
 The work of hunters is another thing:  
 I have come after them and made repair  
 Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
 But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
 To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
 No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
 But at spring mending-time we find them there.  
 I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;  
 And on a day we meet to walk the line  
 And set the wall between us once again.  
 We keep the wall between us as we go.  
 To each the boulders that have fallen to each.  
 And some are loaves and some so nearly balls  
 We have to use a spell to make them balance:  
 "Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"  
 We wear our fingers rough with handling them.  
 Oh, just another kind of out-door game,  
 One on a side. It comes to little more:  
 There where it is we do not need the wall:  
 He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
 My apple trees will never get across  
 And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
 He only says, "Good fences make good neighbours."  
 Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder

If I could put a notion in his head:  
 "Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it  
 Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.  
 Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
 What I was walling in or walling out,  
 And to whom I was like to give offence.  
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
 That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,  
 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather  
 He said it for himself. I see him there  
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top  
 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.  
 He moves in darkness as it seems to me,  
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.  
 He will not go behind his father's saying,  
 And he likes having thought of it so well  
 He says again, "Good fences make good neighbours."

## Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
 His house is in the village though;  
 He will not see me stopping here  
 To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
 To stop without a farmhouse near  
 Between the woods and frozen lake  
 The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
 To ask if there is some mistake.  
 The only other sound's the sweep  
 Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
 But I have promises to keep,  
 And miles to go before I sleep,  
 And miles to go before I sleep.

## The Runaway

Once when the snow of the year was beginning to fall,  
 We stopped by a mountain pasture to say, "Whose colt?"  
 A little Morgan had one forefoot on the wall,  
 The other curled at his breast. He dipped his head  
 And snorted at us. And then he had to bolt.  
 We heard the miniature thunder where he fled,  
 And we saw him, or thought we saw him, dim and grey  
 Like a shadow against the curtain of falling flakes.  
 "I think the little fellow's afraid of the snow.  
 He isn't winter-broken. It isn't play  
 With the little fellow at all. He's running away.  
 I doubt if even his mother could tell him, 'Sakes,  
 It's only weather.' He'd think she didn't know!  
 Where is his mother? He can't be out alone."  
 And now he comes again with clatter of stone,  
 And mounts the wall again with whited eyes  
 And all his tail that isn't hair up straight.  
 He shudders his coat as if to throw off flies.  
 "Whoever it is that leaves him out so late,  
 When other creatures have gone to stall and bin,  
 Ought to be told to come and take him in."

## The Pasture

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;  
 I'll only stop to rake the leaves away  
 (And wait to watch the water clear, I may):  
 I sha'n't be gone long. — You come too.  
  
 I'm going out to fetch the little calf  
 That's standing by the mother. It's so young,  
 It totters when she licks it with her tongue. "  
 I sha'n't be gone long. — You come too.

## The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

## The Death of the Hired Man

Mary sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table  
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,  
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage  
To meet him in the doorway with the news  
And put him on his guard. "Silas is back."  
She pushed him outward with her through the door  
And shut it after her. "Be kind," she said.  
She took the market things from Warren's arms  
And set them on the porch, then drew him down  
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.

"When was I ever anything but kind to him?  
But I'll not have the fellow back," he said.  
"I told him so last haying, didn't I?"

'If he left then,' I said, 'that ended it.'  
 What good is he? Who else will harbour him  
 At his age for the little he can do?  
 What help he is there's no depending on.  
 Off he goes always when I need him most.  
 'He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,  
 Enough at least to buy tobacco with,  
 So he won't have to beg and be beholden.'  
 'All right,' I say, 'I can't afford to pay  
 Any fixed wages, though I wish I could.'  
 'Someone else can.' 'Then someone else will have to.'  
 I shouldn't mind his bettering himself  
 If that was what it was. You can be certain,  
 When he begins like that, there's someone at him  
 Trying to coax him off with pocket-money, —  
 In haying time, when any help is scarce.  
 In winter he comes back to us. I'm done."

"Sh! not so loud: he'll hear you," Mary said.

"I want him to: he'll have to soon or late."

"He's worn out. He's asleep beside the stove.  
 When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,  
 Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,  
 A miserable sight, and frightening, too —  
 You needn't smile — I didn't recognize him —  
 I wasn't looking for him — and he's changed.  
 Wait till you see."

"Where did you say he'd been?"

"He didn't say. I dragged him to the house,  
 And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke.  
 I tried to make him talk about his travels.  
 Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off."

"What did he say? Did he say anything?"

"But little."

"Anything? Mary, confess  
 He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me."

"Warren!"

"But did he? I just want to know."

“Of course he did. What would you have him say?  
Surely you wouldn’t grudge the poor old man  
Some humble way to save his self-respect.  
He added, if you really care to know,  
He meant to clear the upper pasture, too.  
That sounds like something you have heard before?  
Warren, I wish you could have heard the way  
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look  
Two or three times — he made me feel so queer —  
To see if he was talking in his sleep.  
He ran on Harold Wilson — you remember —  
The boy you had in haying four years since.  
He’s finished school, and teaching in his college.  
Silas declares you’ll have to get him back.  
He says they two will make a team for work:  
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!  
The way he mixed that in with other things.  
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft  
On education — you know how they fought  
All through July under the blazing sun,  
Silas up on the cart to build the load,  
Harold along beside to pitch it on.”

“Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot.”

“Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.  
You wouldn’t think they would. How some things linger!  
Harold’s young college boy’s assurance piqued him.  
After so many years he still keeps finding  
Good arguments he sees he might have used.  
I sympathise. I know just how it feels  
To think of the right thing to say too late.  
Harold’s associated in his mind with Latin.  
He asked me what I thought of Harold’s saying  
He studied Latin like the violin  
Because he liked it — that an argument!  
He said he couldn’t make the boy believe  
He could find water with a hazel prong —  
Which showed how much good school had ever done him.  
He wanted to go over that. But most of all  
He thinks if he could have another chance  
To teach him how to build a load of hay —”



"I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.  
 He bundles every forkful in its place,  
 And tags and numbers it for future reference,  
 So he can find and easily dislodge it  
 In the unloading. Silas does that well.  
 He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.  
 You never see him standing on the hay  
 He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself."

"He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be  
 Some good perhaps to someone in the world.  
 He hates to see a boy the fool of books.  
 Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,  
 And nothing to look backward to with pride,  
 And nothing to look forward to with hope,  
 So now and never any different."

Part of a moon was falling down the west,  
 Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.  
 Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw it  
 And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand  
 Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,  
 Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,  
 As if she played unheard some tenderness  
 That wrought on him beside her in the night.  
 "Warren," she said, "he has come home to die:  
 You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time."

"Home," he mocked gently.

"Yes, what else but home?

It all depends on what you mean by home.  
 Of course he's nothing to us, any more  
 Than was the hound that came a stranger to us  
 Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail."

"Home is the place where, when you have to go there,  
 They have to take you in."

"I should have called it  
 Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,  
 Picked up a little stick, and brought it back  
 And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.  
 "Silas has better claim on us you think

Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles  
 As the road winds would bring him to his door.  
 Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day  
 Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,  
 A somebody — director in the bank."

"He never told us that."

"We know it though."

"I think his brother ought to help, of course.  
 I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of right  
 To take him in, and might be willing to —  
 He may be better than appearances.  
 But have some pity on Silas. Do you think  
 If he had any pride in claiming kin  
 Or anything he looked for from his brother,  
 He'd keep so still about him all this time?"

"I wonder what's between them."

"I can tell you.

Silas is what he is — we wouldn't mind him —  
 But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.  
 He never did a thing so very bad.  
 He don't know why he isn't quite as good  
 As anybody. Worthless though he is,  
 He won't be made ashamed to please his brother."

"I can't think Si ever hurt anyone."

"No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay  
 And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-back.  
 He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.  
 You must go in and see what you can do.  
 I made the bed up for him there to-night.  
 You'll be surprised at him — how much he's broken.  
 His working days are done; I'm sure of it."

"I'd not be in a hurry to say that."

"I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.  
 But, Warren, please remember how it is:  
 He's come to help you ditch the meadow.  
 He has a plan. You mustn't laugh at him.  
 He may not speak of it, and then he may.  
 I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud  
 Will hit or miss the moon."

It hit the moon.  
 Then there were three there, making a dim row,  
 The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.  
 Warren returned — too soon, it seemed to her,  
 Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.  
 “Warren?” she questioned.

“Dead,” was all he answered.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What causes the gaps which are found in rock walls in the spring?
2. Why is the little colt running away?
3. Can you apply the symbolism of “The Road Not Taken” to your own experience?
4. What is the hired man’s one accomplishment?
5. Who are the five people characterized in “The Death of the Hired Man,” and what are they like? What two definitions of home are given in this poem? In what meter is it written?

### W. H. AUDEN

*W. H. Auden, English poet who came to America as a permanent resident in 1939, has been praised especially for his “wit” and “astonishing virtuosity.” During the 1930’s he was one of a small group of brilliant English poets, including Stephen Spender and others, in London, leftist in sympathy and in rebellion against middle class conventions. Poems (1930), Letters from Iceland (1937 — with MacNeice), New Year Letter (1941), and For the Time Being (1944) are among his chief works. “One of his most constant themes,” a critic has noted, “is the journey, the search, the questing traveler in an insane and desperate society.”*

## The Unknown Citizen

(To JS/07/M/378  
 This Marble Monument  
 Is Erected by the State)

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be  
 One against whom there was no official complaint,  
 And all the reports on his conduct agree  
 That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,  
 For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.  
 Except for the War till the day he retired  
 He worked in a factory and never got fired,

But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.  
 Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,  
 For his Union reports that he paid his dues,  
 (Our report on his Union shows it was sound)  
 And our Social Psychology workers found  
 That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.  
 The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day  
 And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.  
 Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,  
 And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.  
 Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare  
 He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Instalment Plan  
 And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,  
 A phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.  
 Our researchers into Public Opinion are content  
 That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;  
 When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.  
 He was married and added five children to the population,  
 Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his generation,  
 And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.  
 Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:  
 Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

## Lay Your Sleeping Head, My Love

Lay your sleeping head, my love,  
 Human on my faithless arm;  
 Time and fevers burn away  
 Individual beauty from  
 Thoughtful children, and the grave  
 Proves the child ephemeral:  
 But in my arms till break of day  
 Let the living creature lie,  
 Mortal, guilty, but to me  
 The entirely beautiful.

Soul and body have no bounds:  
 To lovers as they lie upon  
 Her tolerant enchanted slope

In their ordinary swoon,  
 Grave the vision Venus sends  
 Of supernatural sympathy,  
 Universal love and hope;  
 While an abstract insight wakes  
 Among the glaciers and the rocks  
 The hermit's sensual ecstasy.

Certainty, fidelity  
 On the stroke of midnight pass  
 Like vibrations of a bell,  
 And fashionable madmen raise  
 Their pedantic boring cry:  
 Every farthing of the cost,  
 All the dreaded cards foretell,  
 Shall be paid, but from this night  
 Not a whisper, not a thought,  
 Not a kiss nor look be lost.

Beauty, midnight, vision dies:  
 Let the winds of dawn that blow  
 Softly round your dreaming head  
 Such a day of sweetness show  
 Eye and knocking heart may bless,  
 Find the mortal world enough;  
 Noons of dryness see you fed  
 By the involuntary powers,  
 Nights of insult let you pass  
 Watched by every human love.

## Musée des Beaux Arts

About suffering they were never wrong,  
 The Old Masters: how well they understood  
 Its human position; how it takes place  
 While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;  
 How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting  
 For the miraculous birth, there always must be  
 Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating  
 On a pond at the edge of the wood:  
 They never forgot

That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course  
 Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot  
 Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse  
 Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

In Brueghel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns away  
 Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may  
 Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,  
 But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone  
 As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green  
 Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen  
 Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,  
 Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

## In Memory of W. B. Yeats

(d. Jan. 1939)

### 3

Earth, receive an honoured guest;  
 William Yeats is laid to rest:  
 Let the Irish vessel lie  
 Emptied of its poetry.

Time that is intolerant  
 Of the brave and innocent,  
 And indifferent in a week  
 To a beautiful physique,  
 Worships language and forgives  
 Everyone by whom it lives;  
 Pardons cowardice, conceit,  
 Lays its honours at their feet.

Time that with this strange excuse  
 Pardoned Kipling and his views,  
 And will pardon Paul Claudel,  
 Pardons him for writing well.

In the nightmare of the dark  
 All the dogs of Europe bark,  
 And the living nations wait,  
 Each sequestered in its hate;

Intellectual disgrace  
 Stares from every human face,  
 And the seas of pity lie  
 Locked and frozen in each eye  
 Follow, poet, follow right  
 To the bottom of the night,  
 With your unconstraining voice  
 Still persuade us to rejoice;  
 With the farming of a verse  
 Make a vineyard of the curse,  
 Sing a human unsuccess  
 In a rapture of distress;  
 In the deserts of the heart  
 Let the healing fountain start,  
 In the prison of his days  
 Teach the free man how to praise.

## At the Manger\*

I

*Mary*

O shut your bright eyes that mine must endanger  
 With their watchfulness; protected by its shade  
 Escape from my care: what can you discover  
 From my tender look but how to be afraid?  
 Love can but confirm the more it would deny.

Close your bright eye.

Sleep. What have you learned from the womb that bore you  
 But an anxiety your Father cannot feel?  
 Sleep. What will the flesh that I gave do for you,  
 Or my mother love, but tempt you from His will?  
 Why was I chosen to teach His Son to weep?  
 Little One, sleep.

Dream. In human dreams earth ascends to Heaven  
 Where no one need pray nor ever feel alone.  
 In your first few hours of life here, O have you

\* From *For the Time Being*.

Chosen already what death must be your own?  
 How soon will you start on the Sorrowful Way?  
 Dream while you may.

II

*First Wise Man*

Led by the light of an unusual star,  
 We hunted high and low.

*Second Wise Man*

Have travelled far,  
 For many days, a little group alone  
 With doubts, reproaches, boredom, the unknown.

*Third Wise Man*

Through stifling gorges.

*First Wise Man*

Over level lakes,

*Second Wise Man*

Tundras intense and irresponsible seas.

*Third Wise Man*

In vacant crowds and humming silences,

*First Wise Man*

By ruined arches and past modern shops,

*Second Wise Man*

Counting the miles,

*Third Wise Man*

And the absurd mistakes.

*The Three Wise Men*

O here and now our endless journey stops.

*First Shepherd*

We never left the place where we were born,

*Second Shepherd*

Have only lived one day, but every day,

*Third Shepherd*

Have walked a thousand miles yet only worn  
 The grass between our work and home away.



*First Shephera*

Lonely we were though never left alone.

*Second Shepherd*

The solitude familiar to the poor  
Is feeling that the family next door,  
The way it talks, eats, dresses, loves, and hates,  
Is indistinguishable from one's own.

*Third Shepherd*

Tonight for the first time the prison gates  
Have opened.

*First Shepherd*

Music and sudden light

*Second Shepherd*

Have interrupted our routine tonight,

*Third Shepherd*

And swept the filth of habit from our hearts.

*The Three Shepherds*

O here and now our endless journey starts.

*Wise Men*

Our arrogant longing to attain the tomb,

*Shepherds*

Our sullen wish to go back to the womb,

*Wise Men*

To have no past,

*Shepherds*

No future,

*Tutti*

Is refused.

And yet, without our knowledge, Love has used  
Our weakness as a guard and guide.

We bless

*Wise Men*

Our lives' impatience,

*Shepherds*

Our lives' laziness,

*Tutti*

And bless each other's sin, exchanging here

*Wise Men*

Exceptional conceit

*Shepherds*

With average fear.

*Tutti*

Released by Love from isolating wrong,  
Let us for Love unite our various song,  
Each with his gift according to his kind  
Bringing this child his body and his mind.

III

*Wise Men*

Child, at whose birth we would do obsequy  
For our tall errors of imagination,  
Redeem our talents with your little cry.

*Shepherds*

Clinging like sheep to the earth for protection,  
We have not ventured far in any direction:  
Wean, Child, our aging flesh away  
From its childish way.

*Wise Men*

Love is more serious than Philosophy  
Who sees no humour in her observation  
That Truth is knowing that we know we lie.

*Shepherds*

When, to escape what our memories are thinking,  
We go out at nights and stay up drinking,  
Stay then with our sick pride and mind  
The forgetful mind.

*Wise Men*

Love does not will enraptured apathy;  
 Fate plays the passive role of dumb temptation  
 To wills where Love can doubt, affirm, deny.

*Shepherds*

When, chafing at the rule of old offences,  
 We run away to the sea of the senses,  
     On strange beds then O welcome home  
     Our horror of home.

*Wise Men*

Love knows of no somatic tyranny;  
 For homes are built for Love's accommodation  
 By bodies from the void they occupy.

*Shepherds*

When, exhausting our wills with our evil courses,  
 We demand the good-will of cards and horses,  
     Be then our lucky certainty  
     Of uncertainty.

*Wise Men*

Love does not fear substantial anarchy,  
 But vividly expresses obligation  
 With movement and in spontaneity.

*Shepherds*

When, feeling the great boots of the rich on our faces,  
 We live in the hope of one day changing places,  
     Be then the truth of our abuse  
     That we abuse.

*Wise Men*

The singular is not Love's enemy;  
 Love's possibilities of realisation  
 Require an Otherness that can say *I*

*Shepherds*

When in dreams the beasts and cripples of resentment  
 Rampage and revel to our hearts' contentment,  
     Be then the poetry of hate  
     That replaces hate.

*Wise Men*

Not In but With our time Love's energy  
 Exhibits Love's immediate operation;  
 The choice to love is open till we die.

*Shepherds*

O Living Love, by your birth we are able  
 Not only, like the ox and ass of the stable,  
 To love with our live wills, but love,  
 Knowing we love.

*Tutti*

O Living Love replacing phantasy,  
 O Joy of life revealed in Love's creation;  
 Our mood of longing turns to indication:  
 Space is the Whom our loves are needed by,  
 Time is our choice of How to love and Why.

## QUESTIONS

1. What point is made about suffering in "Musée des Beaux Arts"? Who was Icarus?
2. What, according to the poem on Yeats, does a poet do for his fellow men?
3. What modern institutions are satirized in "The Unknown Citizen"? To what extent do you think modern civilization deprives the individual of liberty and happiness?
4. In what ways do the shepherds and the wise men, in "At the Manger," symbolize all mankind? What has Mary, as his mother, given to the Christ Child that makes her sorrowful as she sings her lullaby?

## COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION XII

1. Compare the telling of a story in the early ballads, narrative poems, dramatic monologues, and dialogues. Which poems in this section have plot elements? Which have more fully developed plots?
2. In what ways are the sonnets of Elizabeth Barrett Browning like Shakespeare's? How are they different? Compare with Keats's in subject matter.
3. Define the following forms and give an example of each: ballad, lyric, sonnet, ode, dramatic monologue.
4. Which are the most memorable characters in these poems? Compare with short stories and plays; are poets limited by having to write in verse?
5. Compare "The Death of the Hired Man," which has been given as a play, with "At the Manger," part of a Christmas oratorio (discuss characters, theme, setting, etc.).
6. Find a good quotation, one which you might use in a speech or essay, on each of the following topics: death; love; friendship; home; modern man; war; nature; faith; beauty.
7. Make several generalizations about modern poetry — style and treatment of subject matter — on the basis of the poems of Housman, Frost, and Auden. Which of the older poets do you consider most modern? Why?



## SECTION

# XII

## THE NOVEL

The novel and the short story have a similar construction and purpose. Both are narrative forms; both have the usual elements of plot, characters, setting, and theme. But they are very different in scope, and thus each has a different effect upon the reader. The short story produces a single impression, presents a single vista, usually through the eyes of one major character. The novel, on the other hand, overarches many aspects of life, usually viewed through the eyes of a number of characters; it often presents a complete society.

In this section the novel is represented not by a single specimen, but by complete parts of a number of English and American masterpieces. An episode central to the plot and theme of each novel has been selected. Some of these episodes (groups of chapters) are not much longer than full-length short stories; but they are different. They finish a certain action, yet leave a question in your mind about what will happen next: something has been started, or mentioned, in the episode which is not cleared up. (In *The Bridges at Toko-ri* by James Michener, the hero is rescued from the sea — but what about those bridges which must be bombed? what about his wife who has just come to Japan?) Each episode has a beginning, middle, and end, yet is not encumbered, as a short story must be, with explanations of what happened before, or attempts to tie up all loose ends. (In *Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain, Huck's adventure begins with his raft being wrecked — but earlier episodes have explained how Huck and Jim got on the raft in the first place, later episodes will tell where they are going next, and what finally happens to Jim.) This gives the novelist room for more characters, more fully characterized, sometimes developing from birth to death. As a result, you have a stronger illusion of being in another world and wanting to explore it further, of wanting the narrative *not* to end ("I should have liked it to continue indefinitely, to keep coming out always, to be one of the regular things of life," says one of James's characters

of a serialized novel). This illusion and expectation constitute the special pleasure afforded by the novel; and since novels are usually read several chapters at a time, the episodes included here should give you this pleasure.

If, while you are reading them, your instructor should request you to write a scene from a novel, you would have to ask yourself first of all what kind of events you wanted to write about, and what purpose you would have in relating them. Would your action be mental or physical? Would the setting be everyday life or exotic adventure? Would you satirize contemporary abuses, or write of the glamorous past? Would you try to give a realistic account of front-line fighting, or delve into the inner life of an adolescent? In other words, would you be most interested in attempting an historical novel, like Tolstoi's *War and Peace*, or a novel of adventure, like Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*; a novel of manners, like Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, of social protest, like Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, or of social satire, like Lewis's *Arrowsmith*?

These are only a few of the many types of novel developed in two and a half centuries of novel-writing. Starting with Defoe's straightforward tales of adventure (*Robinson Crusoe*) and picaresque novels (tale of a rogue: *Moll Flanders*) and with Samuel Richardson's realistic novels of manners (*Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*), the form has burgeoned into the rich variety of modern literature. Let us look at the types represented in this section.

First, the novel of adventure. This emphasizes action, conflict between characters, an atmosphere of excitement and suspense. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens constructs a powerful beginning for a novel of adventure about the career of a poor boy who becomes involved in a mystery. He uses a single point of view to transport us into the story, making us see the gloomy churchyard and the convict ("A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg") through Pip's frightened eyes. With Pip we hear the convict cry out in "a terrible voice" and find ourselves turned upside down and threatened until we promise to steal the food the convict needs. At the same time, by vivid primary adjectives and figures of speech, Dickens establishes the bleak atmosphere he desires: the marshes are "just a long black horizontal line . . . and the river . . . another horizontal line, not nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky . . . just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed." The convict limps toward the gibbet which once held a pirate, looking "as if he were the pirate come to life, and come down, and going back to hook himself up again."

Mark Twain's beloved *Huckleberry Finn* is also packed with action ("All of a sudden, bang! bang! bang! goes three or four guns — the men had slipped around through the woods and come in from behind without their horses! The boys jumped for the river — both of them hurt —") and has its own macabre setting in the lonely, candlelit mansion of the feuding Grangerfords at which Huck arrives one night. But it contains another element which makes a welcome

addition to the novel of adventure: humor. That is found in the parodies of sentimental poetry and painting (Emmeline Grangerford's "works") and in Huck's shrewd remarks on the deadly situation in which he finds himself, e.g.: "Next Sunday we all went to church. . . . The men took their guns along, so did Buck, and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall. The Shepherdsons [feud rivals] done the same. It was pretty ornery preaching — all about brotherly love, and such-like tiresomeness; but everybody said it was a good sermon and they all talked it over going home. . . ." Of course this novel is much more than a boy's adventure story; it is a panorama of and philosopher's comment upon the society of the Mississippi Valley before the Civil War. But panorama and comment are presented through a simple adventure story offering the reader the familiar thrills of vicarious excitement and the delicious sensation of perils overpassed (as when Huck attains the haven of the raft, at the end of the episode).

Vicarious experience of a different kind is offered the reader of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. The wintry moors, the savage Heathcliff, the remarkable relationships between humans in that isolated house — all these suggest a mystery, to which the first clue is given in the narrator Lockwood's dream, when he is snowbound at Wuthering Heights for a night. This novel has one of the standard openings for a tale of adventure: an outsider arrives on a scene of concealed or unconcealed hostilities (like the arrival of the detective after a murder has been committed); little by little the tragic past which has produced the hatreds and fears of the present is revealed. *Wuthering Heights* is also a love story, a strange and beautiful expression of the need of men and women for each other. The scenes of the spirit of the dead Cathy crying through the storm for entrance to the house and of Heathcliff's breaking down in grief when he hears of this are memorable.

Another species of the novel of adventure is the modern war novel, like Michener's *The Bridges at Toko-ri*. From the time of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (about the Civil War) through Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (World War I) to Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* (World War II), novelists have been concerned with the physical and psychological problems of men (and women) regimented and transported to kill or be killed on distant battlefields. The most common theme is adjustment: that is, rebellion against, or acceptance of, the destiny which has placed the hero in this situation, at this time. The theme is broached at the end of the selection from *The Bridges at Toko-ri*, in the conversation between Admiral Tarrant and bitter young Harry Brubaker, climaxed by mention of the dangerous mission against the communist bridges at Toko-ri ("Flag plot grew silent. . . . Finally Brubaker asked, 'Do we have to knock out those particular bridges?'"). Although the modern war novel, in keeping with its subject matter, has usually been serious, the elements of humor and individual exploit are not missing (as in the charac-



ters of Beer Barrel, and Mike Forney with his green opera hat and kelly green scarf).

Novels of adventure, mystery novels, war novels have in common an unusual subject matter and, except for the war novels, frequently an exaggerated treatment of incident and character. They have been grouped together, by Somerset Maugham, in the category of the "sensational novel." What about novels in Maugham's other chief category, the "realistic novel" or "novel of manners" as it is sometimes called? What thrill, what "escape" or entertainment can the reader derive from the comparatively routine life depicted by Jane Austen, Henry James, or Sinclair Lewis?

One pleasure, certainly, which you can experience in reading a book like Lewis's *Arrowsmith* is that of recognition. The Middle West — the small cities of Iowa, the wheat country of the Dakotas — is much the same today as described in this novel. Daisy Miller, Henry James's impulsive, outspoken, unconventional American girl, still tours Europe. Even Jane Austen's lively Elizabeth Bennet and superior Darcy may be found clashing at parties a hundred and fifty years after the English novelist wrote about them. Henry James claimed to be an "historian of manners," and if such an historian does his work soberly and accurately, the high points of everyday life such as courtship and marriage, starting a career, a vacation romance, will be found to be much the same in one age as another, and the reader will be able to participate in the life of an earlier and otherwise remote society.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, for example, is about the perennial problem, for daughters and their anxious mothers, of finding a husband. Although the predicament of the unmarried girl was much worse in early nineteenth-century England than today — "career girls" were unheard of — Mrs. Bennet's foolish over-solicitude and Mr. Bennet's sardonic resignation to her attitude might be paralleled in twentieth-century families. Jane Austen perfectly characterizes these two in the conversation which opens the novel. Mrs. Bennet has just excitedly told her husband of the arrival of the eligible young Mr. Bingley in the neighborhood, and Mr. Bennet asks,

"Is he married or single?"

"Oh! single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!"

"How so? How can it affect them?"

"My dear Mr. Bennet," replied his wife, "how can you be so tiresome! You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them."

"Is that his design in settling here?"

"Design! Nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he *may* fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes."

Such dialogue is genius. We believe at once in the reality of these characters, we are perfectly aware of the undercurrents of conflict and cooperation between

them, and we turn the page to find out what they will do or say next. With equal deftness, Jane Austen shows Darcy as haughty and stand-offish in a single short speech, having him refuse his friend Bingley's plea that he dance with Elizabeth Bennet by saying, in her hearing, "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt *me*; and I am in no humor at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men." To dialogue which is clear and always in character, Jane Austen adds a straightforward, economical narrative style which omits descriptive details and simply states what was done or said. She has a sharp eye for the little ironies of social relationships, and points them up by her incidents, speeches, and observations like the one with which the novel begins: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." She makes the familiar vivid and amusing.

Henry James's novels of manners take place in more cosmopolitan settings than Jane Austen's and involve more sophisticated, self-conscious characters than her rural gentry and ladies; but the appeal to the reader is fundamentally the same. They present the everyday relationships of men and women, recognizable social types individualized and realized through clever dialogue (e.g., Mrs. Costello's upper middle class stuffiness: "Mrs. Costello sniffed a little at her smelling-bottle. 'And that,' she exclaimed, 'is the young person whom you wanted me to know!'"'). *Daisy Miller* introduces us to a familiar situation, the vacation romance, and to one of the moral problems which fascinated James, the test of understanding and character involved when a person of a certain background and culture is forced to make a judgment upon another of alien antecedents. Will the hero, Winterbourne, who has accepted the worldly standards of Anglo-Saxon émigré society, be able to arrive at a just judgment of Daisy Miller? To these fundamentals of the novel of manners — believable situations and characters, appropriate, character-revealing dialogue — Henry James adds his special awareness of the *mores* of the society he depicts. The international society into which Daisy Miller is blundering becomes almost a character in its own right, and so we have, in addition to the clash between characters, the interaction and tension between each character and the overshadowing "social entity."

The "social entity" is of primary importance, also, in Sinclair Lewis's *Arrowsmith*. It is presented here less subtly, more didactically, because Lewis's novels are not straight novels of manners but novels of social satire. Lewis's purpose is to criticize small town life and the deficiencies of the medical profession, and so, while he includes realistic descriptions of places, characters, and events (the "long undulations of the prairie," the "celebrated poker players, rustic-looking men with stolid faces, men who sat in shirt-sleeves, chewing tobacco," the dramatic account of the death of Novak's child), he also heightens his picture in ways alien to Austen or James. Thus he exaggerates character traits to

caricature (Bert Tozer “cackled”; his fiancée Ada Quist “seemed to speak with her pointed nose as much as with her button of a mouth”); he crowds in unnecessary descriptive detail for a satiric purpose (the catalogue of Dr. Roscoe Geake’s medical supplies company); he piles incident upon incident, some of them (e.g., Bert Tozer’s “booster” campaign for the town) irrelevant to his main plot, which is Arrowsmith’s pursuit of science. These exaggerations, and others like the newspaper account of Arrowsmith’s attempt to save the Novak child, with its fulsome praise of as many local citizens (and subscribers) as possible, show the “social entity” — provincial America — as smug, intolerant, gawkish. The medical profession is revealed as including hand-holders and fee-splitters (Dr. Winter), self-satisfied, “business-man” doctors (Dr. Hesselink), and gossips (Dr. Coughlin). On this crowded canvas Lewis’s characters seem less completely realized than those of a Jane Austen; yet the mingling of realism and satire does produce a wonderful panorama of the unspoiled, ridiculous, robust America of the early 1900’s which, at heart, Lewis loved.

In spite of Lewis and other important twentieth-century authors,\* the future of the novel is uncertain. It was born in a period of settled convictions, fixed social framework, faith in reason. Today it faces the challenge of the mass media in the field of popular entertainment, and of extreme experimentation if written for a smaller, “quality” audience. For many, television is replacing the novel serialized in magazines or published in hard covers, because it provides a less demanding, cheaper form of recreation; while vulgarization is characteristic of the thriving paperback books. The serious novel composed for a smaller audience has sometimes been turned into an instrument of propaganda (for socialism, democracy, the labor movement, etc.) or else into an ivory tower in which the author and his esoteric followers find refuge, or isolation (e.g., novels exhaustively exploring an individual mind, in imitation of Joyce’s *Ulysses* — the “stream-of-consciousness” novel). Many critics have sung the requiem of the form.

It is to be hoped that they are mistaken. The selections in this section should reveal enough of the craftsmanship of great novels — in the handling of an episode, the interplay of character and dialogue, the creation of atmosphere — to suggest the worth and pleasure of novel-reading. And what the individual episodes cannot do you can do for yourself; that is, by going on to read some of the world’s great novels represented here, and others like Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*, Tolstoi’s *War and Peace*, Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*, Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair*, or Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, enter completely into the spacious societies which they present; live with such an unforgettable

\* Reread Faulkner’s “Barn Burning” (p. 547), a short story which fits into the novelistic pattern of Faulkner’s fiction as a whole, as that pattern has been traced by Malcolm Cowley (p. 738). Conrad’s “Youth” (p. 450) is another short story which, in length, approaches the novel form.

character as Cervantes' Knight of La Mancha, or envision, with Tolstoi, a family, a dynasty, against the tapestry of a bygone century.

With what profit? Not simply that, entranced by the spectacle of Moscow in flames, or the flirt Becky Sharpe singing to Lord Steyne, or Don Quixote charging the windmills, we may "escape" the bonds of time and space and neglect our duties, our normal relationships with others; but that we may return to them refreshed and enriched by a new understanding of the human comedy.

Charles Dickens

## Great Expectations

*For a biographical sketch of Charles Dickens, see page 372.*

### CHAPTER I

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister — Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, "*Also Georgiana Wife of the Above*," I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long, which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine — who gave up trying to get a living exceedingly early in that universal struggle — I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers-pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain, that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing, was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

"Oh! Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded in terror. "Pray don't do it, sir."

"Tell us your name!" said the man. "Quick!"

"Pip, sir."

"Once more," said the man, staring at me. "Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man. "Pint out the place!"

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself — for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet — when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips, "what fat cheeks you ha' got."

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized, for my years, and not strong.

"Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I han't half a mind to't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

"There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father alonger your mother?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "him too; late of this parish."

"Ha!" he muttered then, considering. "Who d'ye live with — supposin' you're kindly let to live, which I han't made up my mind about?"

"My sister, sir — Mrs. Joe Gargery — wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

"Now lookee here," he said, "the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know what a file is?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you know what wittles is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out." He tilted me again.

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll, so that the church jumped over its own weather-cock. Then, he held me by the arms in an upright position on top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms:

"You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted and ate. Now, I ain't alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak.

That young man has a secret way peccoliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it wery hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?"

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery, early in the morning.

"Say, Lord strike you dead if you don't!" said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

"Now," he pursued, "you remember what you've undertook, and you remember that young man, and you get home."

"Goo-good-night, sir," I faltered.

"Much of that!" said he, glancing about him over the cold wet flat. "I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!"

At the same time, he hugged his shuddering body in both his arms — clasping himself, as if to hold himself together — and limped towards the low church wall. As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in.

When he came to the low church wall, he got over it, like a man whose legs were numbed and stiff, and then turned round to look for me. When I saw him turning, I set my face towards home, and made the best use of my legs. But presently I looked over my shoulder, and saw him going on again towards the river, still hugging himself in both arms, and picking his way with his sore feet among the great stones dropped into the marshes here and there, for stepping-places when the rains were heavy, or the tide was in.

The marshes were just a long black horizontal line then, as I stopped to look after him; and the river was just another horizontal line, not nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed. On the edge of the river I could faintly make out the only two black things in all the prospect that seemed to be standing upright; one of these was the beacon by which the sailors steered — like an unhooped cask upon a pole — an ugly thing when you were near it; the other a gibbet, with some chains hanging to it which had once held a pirate. The man was limping on towards this latter, as if he were the pirate come to life, and come down, and going back to hook himself up again. It gave me a terrible turn when I thought so; and as I saw the cattle lifting their heads to gaze after him, I wondered whether they thought so too. I looked all round for the horrible young

man, and could see no signs of him. But now I was frightened again, and ran home without stopping.

## CHAPTER II

My sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than I, and had established a great reputation with herself and the neighbours because she had brought me up "by hand." Having at that time to find out for myself what the expression meant, and knowing her to have a hard and heavy hand, and to be much in the habit of laying it upon her husband as well as upon me, I supposed that Joe Gargery and I were both brought up by hand.

She was not a good-looking woman, my sister; and I had a general impression that she must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand. Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seemed to have somehow got mixed with their own whites. He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow — a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness.

My sister, Mrs. Joe, with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin, that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soap. She was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron, fastened over her figure behind with two loops, and having a square impregnable bib in front, that was stuck full of pins and needles. She made it a powerful merit in herself, and a strong reproach against Joe, that she wore this apron so much. Though I really see no reason why she should have worn it at all; or why, if she did wear it at all, she should not have taken it off every day of her life.

Joe's forge adjoined our house, which was a wooden house, as many of the dwellings in our country were — most of them, at that time. When I ran home from the churchyard, the forge was shut up, and Joe was sitting alone in the kitchen. Joe and I being fellow-sufferers, and having confidences as such, Joe imparted a confidence to me, the moment I raised the latch of the door and peeped in at him opposite to it, sitting in the chimney-corner.

"Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times, looking for you, Pip. And she's out now, making it a baker's dozen."

"Is she?"

"Yes, Pip," said Joe; "and what's worse, she's got Tickler with her."

At this dismal intelligence, I twisted the only button on my waistcoat round and round, and looked in great depression at the fire. Tickler was a wax-ended piece of cane, worn smooth by collision with my tickled frame.

"She sot down," said Joe, "and she got up, and she made a grab at Tickler, and she Ram-paged out. That's what she did," said Joe, slowly clearing the fire between the lower bars with the poker, and looking at it: "she Ram-paged out, Pip."



"Has she been gone long, Joe?" I always treated him as a larger species of child, and as no more than my equal.

"Well," said Joe, glancing up at the Dutch clock, "she's been on the Ram-page, this last spell, about five minutes, Pip. She's a-coming! Get behind the door, old chap, and have the jack-towel betwixt you."

I took the advice. My sister, Mrs. Joe, throwing the door wide open, and finding an obstruction behind it, immediately divined the cause, and applied Tickler to its further investigation. She concluded by throwing me — I often served as a connubial missile — at Joe, who, glad to get hold of me on any terms, passed me on into the chimney and quietly fenced me up there with his great leg.

"Where have you been, you young monkey?" said Mrs. Joe, stamping her foot. "Tell me directly what you've been doing to wear me away with fret and fright and worrit, or I'd have you out of that corner if you was fifty Pips, and he was five hundred Gargerys."

"I have only been to the churchyard," said I, from my stool, crying and rubbing myself.

"Churchyard!" repeated my sister. "If it warn't for me you'd have been to the churchyard long ago, and stayed there. Who brought you up by hand?"

"You did," said I.

"And why did I do it, I should like to know?" exclaimed my sister.

I whimpered, "I don't know."

"I don't!" said my sister. "I'd never do it again! I know that. I may truly say I've never had this apron of mine off, since born you were. It's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife, and him a Gargery, without being your mother."

My thoughts strayed from that question as I looked disconsolately at the fire. For, the fugitive out on the marshes with the ironed leg, the mysterious young man, the file, the food, and the dreadful pledge I was under to commit a larceny on those sheltering premises, rose before me in the avenging coals.

"Hah!" said Mrs. Joe, restoring Tickler to his station. "Churchyard, indeed! You may well say churchyard, you two." One of us, by-the-bye, had not said it at all. "You'll drive *me* to the churchyard betwixt you, one of these days, and oh, a pr-r-recious pair you'd be without me!"

As she applied herself to set the tea-things, Joe peeped down at me over his leg, as if he were mentally casting me and himself up, and calculating what kind of pair we practically should make, under the grievous circumstances fore-shadowed. After that, he sat feeling his right-side flaxen curls and whisker, and following Mrs. Joe about with his blue eyes, as his manner always was at squally times.

My sister had a trenchant way of cutting our bread-and-butter for us, that never varied. First, with her left hand she jammed the loaf hard and fast against her bib — where it sometimes got a pin into it, and sometimes a needle, which

we afterwards got into our mouths. Then she took some butter (not too much) on a knife and spread it on the loaf, in an apothecary kind of way, as if she were making a plaister — using both sides of the knife with a slapping dexterity, and trimming and moulding the butter off round the crust. Then, she gave the knife a final smart wipe on the edge of the plaister, and then sawed a very thick round off the loaf: which she finally, before separating from the loaf, hewed into two halves, of which Joe got one, and I the other.

On the present occasion, though I was hungry, I dared not eat my slice. I felt that I must have something in reserve for my dreadful acquaintance, and his ally the still more dreadful young man. I knew Mrs. Joe's housekeeping to be of the strictest kind, and that my larcenous researches might find nothing available in the safe. Therefore I resolved to put my hunk of bread-and-butter down the leg of my trousers.

The effort of resolution necessary to the achievement of this purpose, I found to be quite awful. It was as if I had to make up my mind to leap from the top of a high house, or plunge into a great depth of water. And it was made the more difficult by the unconscious Joe. In our already mentioned freemasonry as fellow-sufferers, and in his good-natured companionship with me, it was our evening habit to compare the way we bit through our slices, by silently holding them up to each other's admiration now and then — which stimulated us to new exertions. To-night, Joe several times invited me, by the display of his fast-diminishing slice, to enter upon our usual friendly competition; but he found me, each time, with my yellow mug of tea on one knee, and my untouched bread-and-butter on the other. At last, I desperately considered that the thing I contemplated must be done, and that it had best be done in the least improbable manner consistent with the circumstances. I took advantage of a moment when Joe had just looked at me, and got my bread-and-butter down my leg.

Joe was evidently made uncomfortable by what he supposed to be my loss of appetite, and took a thoughtful bite out of his slice, which he didn't seem to enjoy. He turned it about in his mouth much longer than usual, pondering over it a good deal, and after all gulped it down like a pill. He was about to take another bite, and had just got his head on one side for a good purchase on it, when his eye fell on me, and he saw that my bread-and-butter was gone.

The wonder and consternation with which Joe stopped on the threshold of his bite and stared at me, were too evident to escape my sister's observation.

"What's the matter now?" said she, smartly, as she put down her cup.

"I say, you know!" muttered Joe, shaking his head at me in a very serious remonstrance. "Pip, old chap! You'll do yourself a mischief. It'll stick somewhere. You can't have chawed it, Pip."

"What's the matter *now*?" repeated my sister, more sharply than before.

"If you can cough any trifle on it up, Pip, I'd recommend you to do it," said Joe, all aghast. "Manners is manners, but still your elth's your elth."

By this time, my sister was quite desperate, so she pounced on Joe, and, taking him by the two whiskers, knocked his head for a little while against the wall behind him: while I sat in the corner, looking guiltily on.

"Now, perhaps you'll mention what's the matter," said my sister, out of breath, "you staring great stuck pig."

Joe looked at her in a helpless way; then took a helpless bite, and looked at me again.

"You know, Pip," said Joe, solemnly, with his last bite in his cheek, and speaking in a confidential voice, as if we two were quite alone, "you and me is always friends, and I'd be the last to tell upon you, any time. But such a—" he moved his chair, and looked about the floor between us, and then again at me — "such a most uncommon bolt as that!"

"Been bolting his food, has he?" cried my sister.

"You know, old chap," said Joe, looking at me, and not at Mrs. Joe, with his bite still in his cheek, "I bolted, myself, when I was your age — frequent — and as a boy I've been among a many Bolters; but I never see your bolting equal yet, Pip, and it's a mercy you ain't Bolted dead."

My sister made a dive at me, and fished me up by the hair: saying nothing more than the awful words, "You come along and be dosed."

Some medical beast had revived Tar-water in those days as a fine medicine, and Mrs. Joe always kept a supply of it in the cupboard; having a belief in its virtues correspondent to its nastiness. At the best of times, so much of this elixir was administered to me as a choice restorative, that I was conscious of going about, smelling like a new fence. On this particular evening, the urgency of my case demanded a pint of this mixture, which was poured down my throat, for my greater comfort, while Mrs. Joe held my head under her arm, as a boot would be held in a bootjack. Joe got off with half a pint; but was made to swallow that (much to his disturbance, as he sat slowly munching and meditating before the fire), "because he had had a turn." Judging from myself, I should say he certainly had a turn afterwards, if he had had none before.

Conscience is a dreadful thing when it accuses man or boy; but when, in the case of a boy, that secret burden co-operates with another secret burden down the leg of his trousers, it is (as I can testify) a great punishment. The guilty knowledge that I was going to rob Mrs. Joe — I never thought I was going to rob Joe, for I never thought of any of the housekeeping property as his — united to the necessity of always keeping one hand on my bread-and-butter as I sat, or when I was ordered about the kitchen on any small errand, almost drove me out of my mind. Then, as the marsh winds made the fire glow and flare, I thought I heard the voice outside, of the man with the iron on his leg who had sworn me to secrecy, declaring that he couldn't and wouldn't starve until tomorrow, but must be fed now. At other times, I thought, What if the young man who was with so much difficulty restrained from imbruing his hands in

me, should yield to a constitutional impatience, or should mistake the time, and should think himself accredited to my heart and liver to-night, instead of to-morrow! If ever anybody's hair stood on end with terror, mine must have done so then. But, perhaps, nobody's ever did?

It was Christmas Eve, and I had to stir the pudding for next day, with a copper-stick, from seven to eight by the Dutch clock. I tried it with the load upon my leg (and that made me think afresh of the man with the load on *his* leg), and found the tendency of exercise to bring the bread-and-butter out at my ankle, quite unmanageable. Happily I slipped away, and deposited that part of my conscience in my garret bedroom.

"Hark!" said I, when I had done my stirring, and was taking a final warm in the chimney-corner before being sent up to bed; "was that great guns, Joe?"

"Ah!" said Joe. "There's another convict off."

"What does that mean, Joe?" said I.

Mrs. Joe, who always took explanations upon herself, said snappishly, "Escaped. Escaped." Administering the definition like Tar-water.

While Mrs. Joe sat with her head bending over her needlework, I put my mouth into the forms of saying to Joe, "What's a convict?" Joe put *his* mouth into the forms of returning such a highly elaborate answer, that I could make out nothing of it but the single word, "Pip."

"There was a convict off last night," said Joe, aloud, "after sunset-gun. And they fired warning of him. And now it appears they're firing warning of another."

"Who's firing?" said I.

"Drat that boy," interposed my sister, frowning at me over her work, "what a questioner he is. Ask no questions, and you'll be told no lies."

It was not very polite to herself, I thought, to imply that I should be told lies by her, even if I did ask questions. But she never was polite, unless there was company.

At this point, Joe greatly augmented my curiosity by taking the utmost pains to open his mouth very wide, and to put it into the form of a word that looked to me like "sulks." Therefore, I naturally pointed to Mrs. Joe, and put my mouth into the form of saying "her?" But Joe wouldn't hear of that at all, and again opened his mouth very wide, and shook the form of a most emphatic word out of it. But I could make nothing of the word.

"Mrs. Joe," said I, as a last resort, "I should like to know — if you wouldn't much mind — where the firing comes from?"

"Lord bless the boy!" exclaimed my sister, as if she didn't quite mean that, but rather the contrary. "From the Hulks!"

"Oh-h!" said I, looking at Joe. "Hulks!"

Joe gave a reproachful cough, as much as to say, "Well, I told you so."

"And please what's Hulks?" said I.

"That's the way with this boy!" exclaimed my sister, pointing me out with her needle and thread, and shaking her head at me. "Answer him one question, and he'll ask you a dozen directly. Hulks are prison-ships, right 'cross th' meshes." We always used that name for marshes in our country.

"I wonder who's put into prison-ships, and why they're put there?" said I, in a general way, and with quiet desperation.

It was too much for Mrs. Joe, who immediately rose. "I tell you what, young fellow," said she, "I didn't bring you up by hand to badger people's lives out. It would be blame to me, and not praise, if I had. People are put in the Hulks because they murder, and because they rob, and forge, and do all sorts of bad; and they always begin by asking questions. Now, you get along to bed!"

I was never allowed a candle to light me to bed, and, as I went upstairs in the dark, with my head tingling — from Mrs. Joe's thimble having played the tambourine upon it, to accompany her last words — I felt fearfully sensible of the great convenience that the hulks were handy for me. I was clearly on my way there. I had begun by asking questions, and I was going to rob Mrs. Joe.

Since that time, which is far enough away now, I have often thought that few people know what secrecy there is in the young, under terror. No matter how unreasonable the terror, so that it be terror. I was in mortal terror of the young man who wanted my heart and liver; I was in mortal terror of my interlocutor with the iron leg; I was in mortal terror of myself, from whom an awful promise had been extracted; I had no hope of deliverance through my all-powerful sister, who repulsed me at every turn; I am afraid to think of what I might have done on requirement, in the secrecy of my terror.

If I slept at all that night, it was only to imagine myself drifting down the river on a strong spring-tide, to the Hulks; a ghostly pirate calling out to me through a speaking trumpet, as I passed the gibbet-station, that I had better come ashore and be hanged at once, and not put it off. I was afraid to sleep, even if I had been inclined, for I knew that at the first faint dawn of morning I must rob the pantry. There was no doing it in the night, for there was no getting a light by easy friction then; to have got one, I must have struck it out of flint and steel, and have made a noise like the very pirate himself rattling his chains.

As soon as the great black velvet pall outside my little window was shot with grey, I got up and went downstairs; every board upon the way, and every crack in every board, calling after me, "Stop thief!" and "Get up, Mrs. Joe!" In the pantry, which was far more abundantly supplied than usual, owing to the season, I was very much alarmed by a hare hanging up by the heels, whom I rather thought I caught, when my back was half turned, winking. I had no time for verification, no time for selection, no time for anything, for I had no time to spare. I stole some bread, some rind of cheese, about half a jar of mince-meat (which I tied up in my pocket-handkerchief with my last night's slice), some brandy from a stone bottle (which I decanted into a glass bottle I had

secretly used for making that intoxicating-fluid, Spanish-liquorice-water, up in my room; diluting the stone bottle from a jug in the kitchen cupboard), a meat bone with very little on it, and a beautiful round compact pork pie. I was nearly going away without the pie, but I was tempted to mount upon a shelf, to look what it was that was put away so carefully in a covered earthenware dish in a corner, and I found it was the pie, and I took it, in the hope that it was not intended for early use, and would not be missed for some time.

There was a door in the kitchen communicating with the forge; I unlocked and unbolted that door, and got a file from among Joe's tools. Then I put the fastenings as I had found them, opened the door at which I had entered when I ran home last night, shut it, and ran for the misty marshes.

### CHAPTER III

It was a rimy morning, and very damp. I had seen the damp lying on the outside of my little window, as if some goblin had been crying there all night, and using the window for a pocket-handkerchief. Now I saw the damp lying on the bare hedges and spare grass, like a coarser sort of spiders' webs; hanging itself from twig to twig and blade to blade. On every rail and gate, wet lay clammy, and the marsh-mist was so thick, that the wooden finger on the post directing people to our village — a direction which they never accepted, for they never came there — was invisible to me until I was quite close under it. Then, as I looked up at it, while it dripped, it seemed to my oppressed conscience like a phantom devoting me to the Hulks.

The mist was heavier yet when I got out upon the marshes, so that, instead of my running at everything, everything seemed to run at me. This was very disagreeable to a guilty mind. The gates and dykes and banks came bursting at me through the mist, as if they cried as plainly as could be, "A boy with Somebody-else's pork pie! Stop him!" The cattle came upon me with like suddenness, staring out of their eyes, and steaming out of their nostrils, "Holloa, young thief!" One black ox, with a white cravat on — who even had to my awakened conscience something of a clerical air — fixed me so obstinately with his eyes, and moved his blunt head round in such an accusatory manner as I moved round, that I blubbered out to him, "I couldn't help it, sir! It wasn't for myself I took it!" Upon which he put down his head, blew a cloud of smoke out of his nose, and vanished with a kick-up of his hind-legs and a flourish of his tail.

All this time I was getting on towards the river; but however fast I went, I couldn't warm my feet, to which the damp cold seemed riveted, as the iron was riveted to the leg of the man I was running to meet. I knew my way to the Battery, pretty straight, for I had been down there on a Sunday with Joe, and Joe, sitting on an old gun, had told me that when I was 'prentice to him, regularly bound, we would have such Larks there! However, in the confusion of the mist,

I found myself at last too far to the right, and consequently had to try back along the river-side, on the bank of loose stones above the mud and the stakes that staked the tide out. Making my way along here with all dispatch, I had just crossed a ditch which I knew to be very near the Battery, and had just scrambled up the mound beyond the ditch, when I saw the man sitting before me. His back was towards me, and he had his arms folded, and was nodding forward, heavy with sleep.

I thought he would be more glad if I came upon him with his breakfast, in that unexpected manner, so I went forward softly and touched him on the shoulder. He instantly jumped up, and it was not the same man, but another man!

And yet this man was dressed in coarse grey too, and had a great iron on his leg, and was lame, and hoarse, and cold, and was everything that the other man was; except that he had not the same face, and had a flat, broad-brimmed, low-crowned felt hat on. All this I saw in a moment, for I had only a moment to see it in: he swore an oath at me, made a hit at me — it was a round, weak blow that missed me and almost knocked himself down, for it made him stumble — and then he ran into the mist, stumbling twice as he went, and I lost him.

"It's the young man!" I thought, feeling my heart shoot as I identified him. I dare say I should have felt a pain in my liver, too, if I had known where it was.

I was soon at the Battery, after that, and there was the right man — hugging himself and limping to and fro, as if he had never all night left off hugging and limping — waiting for me. He was awfully cold, to be sure. I half expected to see him drop down before my face and die of deadly cold. His eyes looked so awfully hungry, too, that when I handed him the file and he laid it down on the grass, it occurred to me he would have tried to eat it, if he had not seen my bundle. He did not turn me upside down this time, to get at what I had, but left me right side upwards while I opened the bundle and emptied my pockets.

"What's in the bottle, boy?" said he.

"Brandy," said I.

He was already handing mincemeat down his throat in the most curious manner — more like a man who was putting it away somewhere in a violent hurry, than a man who was eating it — but he left off to take some of the liquor. He shivered all the while so violently, that it was quite as much as he could do to keep the neck of the bottle between his teeth, without biting it off.

"I think you have got the ague," said I.

"I'm much of your opinion, boy," said he.

"It's bad about here," I told him. "You've been lying out on the meshes, and they're dreadful aguish. Rheumatic too."

"I'll eat my breakfast afore they're the death of me," said he. "I'd do that if I was going to be strung up to that there gallows as there is over there, directly afterwards. I'll beat the shivers so far, *I'll* bet you."

He was gobbling mincemeat, meat bone, bread, cheese, and pork pie, all at once: staring distrustfully while he did so at the mist all round us, and often stopping — even stopping his jaws — to listen. Some real or fancied sound, some clink upon the river or breathing of beast upon the marsh, now gave him a start, and he said, suddenly: —

“You’re not a deceiving imp? You brought no one with you?”

“No, sir! No!”

“Nor giv’ no one the office to follow you?”

“No!”

“Well,” said he, “I believe you. You’d be but a fierce young hound indeed, if at your time of life you could help to hunt a wretched warmint, hunted as near death and dunghill as this poor wretched warmint is!”

Something clicked in his throat as if he had works in him like a clock, and was going to strike. And he smeared his ragged rough sleeve over his eyes.

Pitying his desolation, and watching him as he gradually settled down upon the pie, I made bold to say, “I am glad you enjoy it.”

“Did you speak?”

“I said, I was glad you enjoyed it.”

“Thankee, my boy. I do.”

I had often watched a large dog of ours eating his food; and I now noticed a decided similarity between the dog’s way of eating and the man’s. The man took strong sharp sudden bites, just like the dog. He swallowed, or rather snapped up, every mouthful, too soon and too fast, and he looked sideways here and there while he ate, as if he thought there was danger in every direction of somebody’s coming to take the pie away. He was altogether too unsettled in his mind over it, to appreciate it comfortably, I thought, or to have anybody to dine with him, without making a chop with his jaws at the visitor. In all of which particulars he was very like the dog.

“I am afraid you won’t leave any of it for him,” said I, timidly; after a silence during which I had hesitated as to the politeness of making the remark. “There’s no more to be got where that came from.” It was the certainty of this fact that impelled me to offer the hint.

“Leave any for him? Who’s him?” said my friend, stopping in his crunching of pie-crust.

“The young man. That you spoke of. That was hid with you.”

“Oh, ah!” he returned, with something like a gruff laugh. “Him? Yes, yes! *He* don’t want no wittles.”

“I thought he looked as if he did,” said I.

The man stopped eating, and regarded me with the keenest scrutiny and the greatest surprise.

“Looked? When?”

“Just now.”



"Where?"

"Yonder," said I, pointing; "over there, where I found him nodding asleep, and thought it was you."

He held me by the collar, and stared at me so, that I began to think his first idea about cutting my throat had revived.

"Dressed like you, you know, only with a hat," I explained, trembling; "and — and" — I was very anxious to put this delicately — "and with — the same reason for wanting to borrow a file. Didn't you hear the cannon last night?"

"Then, there *was* firing!" he said to himself.

"I wonder you shouldn't have been sure of that," I returned, "for we heard it up at home, and that's further away, and we were shut in besides."

"Why, see now!" said he. "When a man's alone on these flats, with a light head and a light stomach, perishing of cold and want, he hears nothin' all night, but guns firing, and voices calling. Hears? He sees the soldiers, with their red coats lighted up by the torches carried afore, closing in round him. Hears his number called, hears himself challenged, hears the rattle of the muskets, hears the orders 'Make ready! Present! Cover him steady, men!' and is laid hands on — and there's nothin'! Why, if I see one pursuing party last night — coming up in order, Damn 'em, with their tramp, tramp — I see a hundred. And as to firing! Why, I see the mist shake with the cannon, arter it was broad day. — But this man;" he had said all the rest as if he had forgotten my being there; "did you notice anything in him?"

"He had a badly bruised face," said I, recalling what I hardly knew I knew.

"Not here?" exclaimed the man, striking his left cheek mercilessly with the flat of his hand.

"Yes, there!"

"Where is he?" He crammed what little food was left, into the breast of his grey jacket. "Show me the way he went. I'll pull him down, like a bloodhound. Curse this iron on my sore leg! Give us hold of the file, boy."

I indicated in what direction the mist had shrouded the other man, and he looked up at it for an instant. But he was down on the rank wet grass, filing at his iron like a madman, and not minding me or minding his own leg, which had an old chafe upon it and was bloody, but which he handled as roughly as if it had no more feeling in it than the file. I was very much afraid of him again, now that he had worked himself into this fierce hurry, and I was likewise very much afraid of keeping away from home any longer. I told him I must go, but he took no notice, so I thought the best thing I could do was to slip off. The last I saw of him, his head was bent over his knee and he was working hard at his fetter, muttering impatient imprecations at it and his leg. The last I heard of him, I stopped in the mist to listen, and the file was still going.

## CHAPTER IV

I fully expected to find a Constable in the kitchen, waiting to take me up. But not only was there no Constable there, but no discovery had yet been made of the robbery. Mrs. Joe was prodigiously busy in getting the house ready for the festivities of the day, and Joe had been put upon the kitchen door-step to keep him out of the dust-pan — an article into which his destiny always led him, sooner or later, when my sister was vigorously reaping the floors of her establishment.

"And where the deuce ha' *you* been?" was Mrs. Joe's Christmas salutation, when I and my conscience showed ourselves.

I said I had been down to hear the Carols. "Ah! well!" observed Mrs. Joe. "You might ha' done worse." Not a doubt of that, I thought.

"Perhaps if I warn't a blacksmith's wife, and (what's the same thing) a slave with her apron never off, *I* should have been to hear the Carols," said Mrs. Joe. "I'm rather partial to Carols myself, and that's the best of reasons for my never hearing any."

Joe, who had ventured into the kitchen after me as the dust-pan had retired before us, drew the back of his hand across his nose with a conciliatory air, when Mrs. Joe darted a look at him, and, when her eyes were withdrawn, secretly crossed his two forefingers, and exhibited them to me, as our token that Mrs. Joe was in a cross temper. This was so much her normal state, that Joe and I would often, for weeks together, be, as to our fingers, like monumental Crusaders as to their legs.

We were to have a superb dinner, consisting of a leg of pickled pork and greens, and a pair of roast stuffed fowls. A handsome mince-pie had been made yesterday morning (which accounted for the mincemeat not being missed), and the pudding was already on the boil. These extensive arrangements occasioned us to be cut off unceremoniously in respect of breakfast; "for I ain't," said Mrs. Joe, "I ain't a-going to have no formal cramming and busting and washing up now, with what I've got before me, I promise you!"

So, we had our slices served out, as if we were two thousand troops on a forced march instead of a man and boy at home; and we took gulps of milk and water, with apologetic countenances, from a jug on the dresser. In the meantime, Mrs. Joe put clean white curtains up, and tacked a new flowered-flounce across the wide chimney to replace the old one, and uncovered the little state parlour across the passage, which was never uncovered at any other time, but passed the rest of the year in a cool haze of silver paper, which even extended to the four little white crockery poodles on the mantelshelf, each with a black nose, and a basket of flowers in his mouth, and each the counterpart of the other. Mrs. Joe was a very clean housekeeper, but had an exquisite art of making her cleanliness more uncomfortable and unacceptable than dirt itself. Cleanliness is next to Godliness, and some people do the same by their religion.

My sister having so much to do, was going to church vicariously; that is to say, Joe and I were going. In his working clothes, Joe was a well-knit characteristic-looking blacksmith; in his holiday clothes, he was more like a scarecrow in good circumstances, than anything else. Nothing that he wore then, fitted him or seemed to belong to him; and everything that he wore then, grazed him. On the present festive occasion he emerged from his room, when the blithe bells were going, the picture of misery, in a full suit of Sunday penitentials. As to me, I think my sister must have had some general idea that I was a young offender whom an *Accoucheur Policeman* had taken up (on my birthday) and delivered over to her, to be dealt with according to the outraged majesty of the law. I was always treated as if I had insisted on being born in opposition to the dictates of reason, religion, and morality, and against the dissuading arguments of my best friends. Even when I was taken to have a new suit of clothes, the tailor had orders to make them like a kind of Reformatory, and on no account to let me have the free use of my limbs.

Joe and I going to church, therefore, must have been a moving spectacle for compassionate minds. Yet, what I suffered outside, was nothing to what I underwent within. The terrors that had assailed me whenever Mrs. Joe had gone near the pantry, or out of the room, were only to be equalled by the remorse with which my mind dwelt on what my hands had done. Under the weight of my wicked secret, I pondered whether the Church would be powerful enough to shield me from the vengeance of the terrible young man, if I divulged to that establishment. I conceived the idea that the time when the banns were read and when the clergyman said, "Ye are now to declare it!" would be the time for me to rise and propose a private conference in the vestry. I am far from being sure that I might not have astonished our small congregation by resorting to this extreme measure, but for its being Christmas Day and no Sunday.

Mr. Wopsle, the clerk at church, was to dine with us; and Mr. Hubble, the wheelwright, and Mrs. Hubble; and Uncle Pumblechook (Joe's uncle, but Mrs. Joe appropriated him), who was a well-to-do cornchandler in the nearest town, and drove his own chaise-cart. The dinner hour was half-past one. When Joe and I got home, we found the table laid, and Mrs. Joe dressed, and the dinner dressing, and the front door unlocked (it never was at any other time) for the company to enter by, and everything most splendid. And still, not a word of the robbery.

The time came, without bringing with it any relief to my feelings, and the company came. Mr. Wopsle, united to a Roman nose and a large shining bald forehead, had a deep voice which he was uncommonly proud of; indeed it was understood among his acquaintance that if you could only give him his head, he would read the clergyman into fits; he himself confessed that if the Church was "thrown open," meaning to competition, he would not despair of making his mark in it. The Church not being "thrown open," he was, as I have said,

our clerk. But he punished the Amens tremendously; and when he gave out the psalm — always giving the whole verse — he looked all round the congregation first, as much as to say, “You have heard our friend overhead; oblige me with your opinion of this style!”

I opened the door to the company — making believe that it was a habit of ours to open that door — and I opened it first to Mr. Wopsle, next to Mr. and Mrs. Hubble, and last of all to Uncle Pumblechook. N.B. *I* was not allowed to call him uncle, under the severest penalties.

“Mrs. Joe,” said Uncle Pumblechook; a large hard-breathing middle-aged slow man, with a mouth like a fish, dull staring eyes, and sandy hair standing upright on his head, so that he looked as if he had just been all but choked, and had that moment come to; “I have brought you as the compliments of the season — I have brought you, Mum, a bottle of sherry wine — and I have brought you, Mum, a bottle of port wine.”

Every Christmas Day he presented himself, as a profound novelty, with exactly the same words, and carrying the two bottles like dumb-bells. Every Christmas Day, Mrs. Joe replied, as she now replied, “Oh, Un—cle Pum—ble—chook! This is kind!” Every Christmas Day he retorted, as he now retorted, “It’s no more than your merits. And now are you all bobbish, and how’s Sixpennorth of halfpence?” meaning me.

We dined on these occasions in the kitchen, and adjourned, for the nuts and oranges and apples, to the parlour; which was a change very like Joe’s change from his working clothes to his Sunday dress. My sister was uncommonly lively on the present occasion, and indeed was generally more gracious in the society of Mrs. Hubble than in other company. I remember Mrs. Hubble as a little curly sharp-edged person in sky-blue, who held a conventionally juvenile position, because she had married Mr. Hubble — I don’t know at what remote period — when she was much younger than he. I remember Mr. Hubble as a tough high-shouldered stooping old man, of a sawdusty fragrance, with his legs extraordinarily wide apart: so that in my short days I always saw some miles of open country between them when I met him coming up the lane.

Among this good company I should have felt myself, even if I hadn’t robbed the pantry, in a false position. Not because I was squeezed in at an acute angle of the table-cloth, with the table in my chest, and the Pumblechookian elbow in my eye, nor because I was not allowed to speak (I didn’t want to speak), nor because I was regaled with the scaly tips of the drumsticks of the fowls, and with those obscure corners of pork of which the pig, when living, had had the least reason to be vain. No; I should not have minded that if they would only have left me alone. But they wouldn’t leave me alone. They seemed to think the opportunity lost, if they failed to point the conversation at me, every now and then, and stick the point into me. I might have been an unfortunate little bull in a Spanish arena, I got so smartingly touched up by these moral goads.

It began the moment we sat down to dinner. Mr. Wopsle said grace with theatrical declamation — as it now appears to me, something like a religious cross of the Ghost in Hamlet with Richard the Third — and ended with the very proper aspiration that we might be truly grateful. Upon which my sister fixed me with her eye, and said, in a low reproachful voice, “Do you hear that? Be grateful.”

“Especially,” said Mr. Pumblechook, “be grateful, boy, to them which brought you up by hand.”

Mrs. Hubble shook her head, and contemplating me with a mournful presentiment that I should come to no good, asked, “Why is it that the young are never grateful?” This moral mystery seemed too much for the company until Mr. Hubble tersely solved it by saying, “Naterally wicious.” Everybody then murmured “True!” and looked at me in a particularly unpleasant and personal manner.

Joe’s station and influence were something feebler (if possible) when there was company, than when there was none. But he always aided and comforted me when he could, in some way of his own, and he always did so at dinner-time by giving me gravy, if there were any. There being plenty of gravy today, Joe spooned into my plate, at this point, about half a pint.

A little later on in the dinner, Mr. Wopsle reviewed the sermon with some severity, and intimated — in the usual hypothetical case of the Church being “thrown open” — what kind of sermon *he* would have given them. After favouring them with some heads of that discourse, he remarked that he considered the subject of the day’s homily, ill-chosen; which was the less excusable, he added, when there were so many subjects “going about.”

“True again,” said Uncle Pumblechook. “You’ve hit it, sir! Plenty of subjects going about, for them that know how to put salt upon their tails. That’s what’s wanted. A man needn’t go far to find a subject, if he’s ready with his salt-box.” Mr. Pumblechook added, after a short interval of reflection, “Look at Pork alone. There’s a subject! If you want a subject, look at Pork!”

“True, sir. Many a moral for the young,” returned Mr. Wopsle; and I knew he was going to lug me in, before he said it, “might be deduced from that text.”

(“You listen to this,” said my sister to me, in a severe parenthesis.)

Joe gave me some more gravy.

“Swine,” pursued Mr. Wopsle, in his deepest voice, and pointing his fork at my blushes, as if he were mentioning my christian name, “Swine were the companions of the prodigal. The gluttony of Swine is put before us, as an example to the young.” (I thought this pretty well in him who had been praising up the pork for being so plump and juicy.) “What is detestable in a pig, is more detestable in a boy.”

“Or girl,” suggested Mr. Hubble.

"Of course, or girl, Mr. Hubble," assented Mr. Wopsle, rather irritably, "but there is no girl present."

"Besides," said Mr. Pumblechook, turning sharp on me, "think what you've got to be grateful for. If you'd been born a Squeaker —"

"He *was*, if ever a child was," said my sister, most emphatically.

Joe gave me some more gravy.

"Well, but I mean a four-footed Squeaker," said Mr. Pumblechook. "If you had been born such, would you have been here now? Not you —"

"Unless in that form," said Mr. Wopsle, nodding towards the dish.

"But I don't mean in that form, sir," returned Mr. Pumblechook, who had an objection to being interrupted; "I mean, enjoying himself with his elders and betters, and improving himself with their conversation, and rolling in the lap of luxury. Would he have been doing that? No, he wouldn't. And what would have been your destination?" turning on me again. "You would have been disposed of for so many shillings according to the market price of the article, and Dunstable the butcher would have come up to you as you lay in your straw, and he would have whipped you under his left arm, and with his right he would have tucked up his frock to get a penknife from out of his waistcoat-pocket, and he would have shed your blood and had your life. No bringing up by hand then. Not a bit of it!"

Joe offered me more gravy, which I was afraid to take.

"He was a world of trouble to you, ma'am," said Mrs. Hubble, commiserating my sister.

"Trouble?" echoed my sister, "trouble?" And then entered on a fearful catalogue of all the illnesses I had been guilty of, and all the acts of sleeplessness I had committed, and all the high places I had tumbled from, and all the low places I had tumbled into, and all the injuries I had done myself, and all the times she had wished me in my grave, and I had contumaciously refused to go there.

I think the Romans must have aggravated one another very much, with their noses. Perhaps they became the restless people they were, in consequence. Anyhow, Mr. Wopsle's Roman nose so aggravated me, during the recital of my misdemeanours, that I should have liked to pull it until he howled. But, all I had endured up to this time, was nothing in comparison with the awful feelings that took possession of me when the pause was broken which ensued upon my sister's recital, and in which pause everybody had looked at me (as I felt painfully conscious) with indignation and abhorrence.

"Yet," said Mr. Pumblechook, leading the company gently back to the theme from which they had strayed, "Pork — regarded as biled — is rich, too; ain't it?"

"Have a little brandy, uncle," said my sister.

O Heavens, it had come at last! He would find it was weak, he would say

it was weak, and I was lost! I held tight to the leg of the table, under the cloth, with both hands, and awaited my fate.

My sister went for the stone bottle, came back with the stone bottle, and poured his brandy out. no one else taking any. The wretched man trifled with his glass — took it up, looked at it through the light, put it down — prolonged my misery. All this time Mrs. Joe and Joe were briskly clearing the table for the pie and pudding.

I couldn't keep my eyes off him. Always holding tight by the leg of the table with my hands and feet, I saw the miserable creature finger his glass playfully, take it up, smile, throw his head back, and drink the brandy off. Instantly afterwards, the company were seized with unspeakable consternation, owing to his springing to his feet, turning round several times in an appalling spasmodic whooping-cough dance, and rushing out at the door; he then became visible through the window, violently plunging and expectorating, making the most hideous faces, and apparently out of his mind.

I held on tight, while Mrs. Joe and Joe ran to him. I didn't know how I had done it, but I had no doubt I had murdered him somehow. In my dreadful situation, it was a relief when he was brought back, and, surveying the company all round as if *they* had disagreed with him, sank down into his chair with the one significant gasp, "Tar!"

I had filled up the bottle from the Tar-water jug. I knew he would be worse by-and-by. I moved the table, like a Medium of the present day, by the vigour of my unseen hold upon it.

"Tar!" said my sister, in amazement. "Why, how ever could Tar come there?"

But Uncle Pumblechook, who was omnipotent in that kitchen, wouldn't hear the word, wouldn't hear of the subject, imperiously waved it all away with his hand, and asked for hot gin-and-water. My sister, who had begun to be alarmingly meditative, had to employ herself actively in getting the gin, the hot water, the sugar, and the lemon peel, and mixing them. For the time at least, I was saved. I still held on to the leg of the table, but clutched it now with the fervour of gratitude.

By degrees, I became calm enough to release my grasp, and partake of pudding. Mr. Pumblechook partook of pudding. All partook of pudding. The course terminated, and Mr. Pumblechook had begun to beam under the genial influence of gin-and-water. I began to think I should get over the day, when my sister said to Joe, "Clean plates — cold."

I clutched the leg of the table again immediately, and pressed it to my bosom as if it had been the companion of my youth and friend of my soul. I foresaw what was coming, and I felt that this time I really was gone.

"You must taste," said my sister, addressing the guests with her best grace. "You must taste, to finish with, such a delightful and delicious present of Uncle Pumblechook's!"

Must they! Let them not hope to taste it!

"You must know," said my sister, rising, "it's a pie; a savoury pork pie."

The company murmured their compliments. Uncle Pumblechook, sensible of having deserved well of his fellow-creatures, said — quite vivaciously, all things considered — "Well, Mrs. Joe, we'll do our best endeavours; let us have a cut at this same pie."

My sister went out to get it. I heard her steps proceed to the pantry. I saw Mr. Pumblechook balance his knife. I saw re-awakening appetite in the Roman nostrils of Mr. Wopsle. I heard Mr. Hubble remark that "a bit of savoury pork pie would lay atop of anything you could mention, and do no harm," and I heard Joe say, "You shall have some, Pip." I never have been absolutely certain whether I uttered a shrill yell of terror, merely in spirit, or in the bodily hearing of the company. I felt that I could bear no more, and that I must run away. I released the leg of the table, and ran for my life.

But I ran no further than the house door, for there I ran head foremost into a party of soldiers with their muskets: one of whom held out a pair of handcuffs to me, saying, "Here you are, look sharp, come on!"

## CHAPTER V

The apparition of a file of soldiers ringing down the butt-ends of their loaded muskets on our door-step, caused the dinner-party to rise from table in confusion, and caused Mrs. Joe, re-entering the kitchen empty-handed, to stop short and stare, in her wondering lament of "Gracious goodness gracious me, what's gone — with the — pie!"

The sergeant and I were in the kitchen when Mrs. Joe stood staring; at which crisis I partially recovered the use of my senses. It was the sergeant who had spoken to me, and he was now looking round at the company, with his handcuffs invitingly extended towards them in his right hand, and his left on my shoulder.

"Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen," said the sergeant, "but as I have mentioned at the door to this smart young shaver" (which he hadn't), "I am on a chase in the name of the king, and I want the blacksmith."

"And pray, what might you want with *him*?" retorted my sister, quick to resent his being wanted at all.

"Missis," returned the gallant sergeant, "speaking for myself, I should reply, the honour and pleasure of his fine wife's acquaintance; speaking for the king, I answer, a little job done."

This was received as rather neat in the sergeant; insomuch that Mr. Pumblechook cried audibly, "Good again!"

"You see, blacksmith," said the sergeant, who had by this time picked out Joe with his eye, "we have had an accident with these, and I find the lock of one



of 'em goes wrong, and the coupling don't act pretty. As they are wanted for immediate service, will you throw your eye over them?"

Joe threw his eye over them, and pronounced that the job would necessitate the lighting of his forge fire, and would take nearer two hours than one. "Will it? Then will you set about it at once, blacksmith?" said the offhand sergeant, "as it's on his Majesty's service. And if my men can bear a hand anywhere, they'll make themselves useful." With that he called to his men, who came trooping into the kitchen one after another, and piled their arms in a corner. And then they stood about, as soldiers do; now, with their hands loosely clasped before them; now, resting a knee or a shoulder; now, easing a belt or a pouch; now opening the door to spit stiffly over their high stocks, out into the yard.

All these things I saw without then knowing that I saw them, for I was in an agony of apprehension. But, beginning to perceive that the handcuffs were not for me, and that the military had so far got the better of the pie as to put it in the background, I collected a little more of my scattered wits.

"Would you give me the Time!" said the sergeant, addressing himself to Mr. Pumblechook, as to a man whose appreciative powers justified the inference that he was equal to the time.

"It's just gone half-past two."

"That's not so bad," said the sergeant, reflecting; "even if I was forced to halt here nigh two hours, that'll do. How far might you call yourselves from the marshes, hereabouts? Not above a mile, I reckon?"

"Just a mile," said Mrs. Joe.

"That'll do. We begin to close in upon 'em about dusk. A little before dusk, my orders are. That'll do."

"Convicts, sergeant?" asked Mr. Wopsle, in a matter-of-course way.

"Ay!" returned the sergeant, "two. They're pretty well known to be out on the marshes still, and they won't try to get clear of 'em before dusk. Anybody here seen anything of any such game?"

Everybody, myself excepted, said no, with confidence. Nobody thought of me.

"Well," said the sergeant, "they'll find themselves trapped in a circle, I except, sooner than they count on. Now, blacksmith! If you're ready, his Majesty the King is."

Joe had got his coat and waistcoat and cravat off, and his leather apron on, and passed into the forge. One of the soldiers opened its wooden windows, another lighted the fire, another turned to at the bellows, the rest stood round the blaze, which was soon roaring. Then Joe began to hammer and clink, hammer and clink, and we all looked on.

The interest of the impending pursuit not only absorbed the general attention, but even made my sister liberal. She drew a pitcher of beer from the cask,

for the soldiers, and invited the sergeant to take a glass of brandy. But Mr. Pumblechook said sharply, "Give him wine, Mum. I'll engage there's no Tar in that!" so, the sergeant thanked him and said that, as he preferred his drink without tar, he would take wine, if it was equally convenient. When it was given him, he drank his Majesty's health, and compliments of the season, and took it all at a mouthful and smacked his lips.

"Good stuff, eh, sergeant?" said Mr. Pumblechook.

"I'll tell you something," returned the sergeant; "I suspect that stuff's of *your* providing."

Mr. Pumblechook, with a fat sort of laugh, said, "Ay, ay? Why?"

"Because," returned the sergeant, clapping him on the shoulder, "you're a man that knows what's what."

"D'ye think so?" said Mr. Pumblechook, with his former laugh. "Have another glass!"

"With you. Hob and nob," returned the sergeant. "The top of mine to the foot of yours — the foot of yours to the top of mine — Ring once, ring twice — the best tune on the Musical Glasses! Your health. May you live a thousand years, and never be a worse judge of the right sort than you are at the present moment of your life!"

The sergeant tossed off his glass again and seemed quite ready for another glass. I noticed that Mr. Pumblechook in his hospitality appeared to forget that he had made a present of the wine, but took the bottle from Mrs. Joe and had all the credit of handing it about in a gush of joviality. Even I got some. And he was so very free of the wine that he even called for the other bottle, and handed that about with the same liberality, when the first was gone.

As I watched them while they all stood clustering about the forge, enjoying themselves so much, I thought what terrible good sauce for a dinner my fugitive friend on the marshes was. They had not enjoyed themselves a quarter so much, before the entertainment was brightened with the excitement he furnished. And now, when they were all in lively anticipation of "the two villains" being taken, and when the bellows seemed to roar for the fugitives, the fire to flare for them, the smoke to hurry away in pursuit of them, Joe to hammer and clink for them, and all the murky shadows on the wall to shake at them in menace as the blaze rose and sank and the red-hot sparks dropped and died, the pale afternoon outside almost seemed in my pitying young fancy to have turned pale on their account, poor wretches.

At last, Joe's job was done, and the ringing and roaring stopped. As Joe got on his coat, he mustered courage to propose that some of us should go down with the soldiers and see what came of the hunt. Mr. Pumblechook and Mr. Hubble declined, on the plea of a pipe and ladies' society: but Mr. Wopsle said he would go, if Joe would. Joe said he was agreeable, and would take me, if Mrs. Joe approved. We never should have got leave to go, I am sure, but for

Mrs. Joe's curiosity to know all about it and how it ended. As it was, she merely stipulated, "If you bring the boy back with his head blown to bits by a musket, don't look to me to put it together again."

The sergeant took a polite leave of the ladies, and parted from Mr. Pumblechook as from a comrade; though I doubt if he were quite as fully sensible of that gentleman's merits under arid conditions, as when something moist was going. His men resumed their muskets and fell in. Mr. Wopsle, Joe, and I, received strict charge to keep in the rear, and to speak no word after we reached the marshes. When we were all out in the raw air and were steadily moving towards our business, I treasonably whispered to Joe, "I hope, Joe, we shan't find them." And Joe whispered to me, "I'd give a shilling if they had cut and run, Pip."

We were joined by no stragglers from the village, for the weather was cold and threatening, the way dreary, the footing bad, darkness coming on, and the people had good fires indoors, and were keeping the day. A few faces hurried to glowing windows and looked after us, but none came out. We passed the finger-post, and held straight on to the churchyard. There, we were stopped a few minutes by a signal from the sergeant's hand, while two or three of his men dispersed themselves among the graves, and also examined the porch. They came in again without finding anything, and then we struck out on the open marshes, through the gate at the side of the churchyard. A bitter sleet came rattling against us here on the east wind, and Joe took me on his back.

Now that we were out upon the dismal wilderness where they little thought I had been within eight or nine hours, and had seen both men hiding, I considered for the first time, with great dread, if we should come upon them, would my particular convict suppose that it was I who had brought the soldiers there? He had asked me if I was a deceiving imp, and he said I should be a fierce young hound if I joined the hunt against him. Would he believe that I was both imp and hound in treacherous earnest, and had betrayed him?

It was of no use asking myself this question now. There I was, on Joe's back, and there was Joe beneath me, charging at the ditches like a hunter, and stimulating Mr. Wopsle not to tumble on his Roman nose, and to keep up with us. The soldiers were in front of us, extending into a pretty wide line with an interval between man and man. We were taking the course I had begun with, and from which I had diverged into the mist. Either the mist was not out again yet, or the wind had dispelled it. Under the low red glare of sunset, the beacon, and the gibbet, and the mound of the Battery, and the opposite shore of the river, were plain, though all of a watery lead colour.

With my heart thumping like a blacksmith at Joe's broad shoulder, I looked all about for any sign of the convicts. I could see none, I could hear none. Mr. Wopsle had greatly alarmed me more than once, by his blowing and hard breathing; but I knew the sounds by this time, and could dissociate them from

the object of pursuit. I got a dreadful start, when I thought I heard the file still going; but it was only a sheep bell. The sheep stopped in their eating and looked timidly at us; and the cattle, their heads turned from the wind and sleet, stared angrily as if they held us responsible for both annoyances; but, except these things, and the shudder of the dying day in every blade of grass, there was no break in the bleak stillness of the marshes.

The soldiers were moving on in the direction of the old Battery, and we were moving on a little way behind them, when, all of a sudden, we all stopped. For, there had reached us, on the wings of the wind and rain, a long shout. It was repeated. It was at a distance towards the east, but it was long and loud. Nay, there seemed to be two or more shouts raised together — if one might judge from a confusion in the sound.

To this effect the sergeant and the nearest men were speaking under their breath, when Joe and I came up. After another moment's listening, Joe (who was a good judge) agreed, and Mr. Wopsle (who was a bad judge) agreed. The sergeant, a decisive man, ordered that the sound should not be answered, but that the course should be changed, and that his men should make towards it "at the double." So we started to the right (where the East was), and Joe pounded away so wonderfully, that I had to hold on tight to keep my seat.

It was a run indeed now, and what Joe called, in the only two words he spoke all the time, "a Winder." Down banks and up banks, and over gates, and splashing into dykes, and breaking among coarse rushes: no man cared where he went. As we came nearer to the shouting, it became more and more apparent that it was made by more than one voice. Sometimes, it seemed to stop altogether, and then the soldiers stopped. When it broke out again, the soldiers made for it at a greater rate than ever, and we after them. After a while, we had so run it down, that we could hear one voice calling "Murder!" and another voice, "Convicts! Runaways! Guard! This way for the runaway convicts!" Then both voices would seem to be stifled in a struggle, and then would break out again. And when it had come to this, the soldiers ran like deer, and Joe too.

The sergeant ran in first, when we had run the noise quite down, and two of his men ran in close upon him. Their pieces were cocked and levelled when we all ran in.

"Here are both men!" panted the sergeant, struggling at the bottom of a ditch. "Surrender, you two! and confound you for two wild beasts! Come asunder!"

Water was splashing, and mud was flying, and oaths were being sworn, and blows were being struck, when some more men went down into the ditch to help the sergeant, and dragged out, separately, my convict and the other one. Both were bleeding and panting and execrating and struggling; but of course I knew them both directly.

"Mind!" said my convict, wiping blood from his face with his ragged sleeves,

and shaking torn hair from his fingers; "*I took him! I give him up to you! Mind that!*"

"It's not much to be particular about," said the sergeant; "it'll do you small good, my man, being in the same plight yourself. Handcuffs there!"

"I don't expect it to do me any good. I don't want it to do me more good than it does now," said my convict, with a greedy laugh. "I took him. He knows it. That's enough for me."

The other convict was livid to look at, and, in addition to the old bruised left side of his face, seemed to be bruised and torn all over. He could not so much as get his breath to speak, until they were both separately handcuffed, but leaned upon a soldier to keep himself from falling.

"Take notice, guard — he tried to murder me," were his first words.

"Tried to murder him?" said my convict, disdainfully. "Try, and not do it? I took him, and giv' him up; that's what I done. I not only prevented him getting off the marshes, but I dragged him here — dragged him this far on his way back. He's a gentleman if you please, this villain. Now the Hulks has got its gentleman again, through me. Murder him? Worth my while, too, to murder him, when I could do worse and drag him back!"

The other one still gasped, "He tried — he tried — to — murder me. Bear — bear witness."

"Lookee here!" said my convict to the sergeant. "Single-handed I got clear of the prison-ship; I made a dash and I done it. I could ha' got clear of these death-cold flats likewise — look at my leg: you won't find much iron on it — if I hadn't made discovery that *he* was here. Let *him* go free? Let *him* profit by the means as I found out? Let *him* make a tool of me afresh and again? Once more? No, no, no. If I had died at the bottom there;" and he made an emphatic swing at the ditch with his manacled hands; "I'd have held to him with that grip, that you should have been safe to find him in my hold."

The other fugitive, who was evidently in extreme horror of his companion, repeated, "He tried to murder me. I should have been a dead man if you had not come up."

"He lies!" said my convict, with fierce energy. "He's a liar born, and he'll die a liar. Look at his face; ain't it written there? Let him turn those eyes of his on me. I defy him to do it."

The other, with an effort at a scornful smile — which could not, however, collect the nervous working of his mouth into any set expression, looked at the soldiers, and looked about at the marshes and at the sky, but certainly did not look at the speaker.

"Do you see him?" pursued my convict. "Do you see what a villain he is? Do you see those grovelling and wandering eyes? That's how he looked when we were tried together. He never looked at me."

The other, always working and working his dry lips and turning his eyes

restlessly about him far and near, did at last turn them for a moment on the speaker, with the words, "You are not much to look at," and with a half-taunting glance at the bound hands. At that point, my convict became so frantically exasperated, that he would have rushed upon him but for the interposition of the soldiers. "Didn't I tell you," said the other convict then, "that he would murder me, if he could?" And any one could see that he shook with fear, and that there broke out upon his lips curious white flakes, like thin snow.

"Enough of this parley," said the sergeant. "Light those torches."

As one of the soldiers, who carried a basket in lieu of a gun, went down on his knee to open it, my convict looked round him for the first time, and saw me. I had alighted from Joe's back on the brink of the ditch when we came up, and had not moved since. I looked at him eagerly when he looked at me, and slightly moved my hands and shook my head. I had been waiting for him to see me, that I might try to assure him of my innocence. It was not at all expressed to me that he even comprehended my intention, for he gave me a look that I did not understand, and it all passed in a moment. But if he had looked at me for an hour or for a day, I could not have remembered his face ever afterwards, as having been more attentive.

The soldier with the basket soon got a light, and lighted three or four torches, and took one himself and distributed the others. It had been almost dark before, but now it seemed quite dark, and soon afterwards very dark. Before we departed from that spot, four soldiers, standing in a ring, fired twice into the air. Presently we saw other torches kindled at some distance behind us, and others on the marshes on the opposite bank of the river. "All right," said the sergeant. "March."

We had not gone far when three cannon were fired ahead of us with a sound that seemed to burst something inside my ear. "You are expected on board," said the sergeant to my convict; "they know you are coming. Don't struggle, my man. Close up here."

The two were kept apart, and each walked surrounded by a separate guard. I had hold of Joe's hand now, and Joe carried one of the torches. Mr. Wopsle had been for going back, but Joe was resolved to see it out, so we went on with the party. There was a reasonably good path now, mostly on the edge of the river, with a divergence here and there where a dyke came, with a miniature windmill on it and a muddy sluice-gate. When I looked round, I could see the other lights coming in after us. The torches we carried, dropped great blotches of fire upon the track, and I could see those, too, lying smoking and flaring. I could see nothing else but black darkness. Our lights warmed the air about us with their pitchy blaze, and the two prisoners seemed rather to like that, as they limped along in the midst of the muskets. We could not go fast, because of their lameness; and they were so spent, that two or three times we had to halt while they rested.

After an hour or so of this travelling, we came to a rough wooden hut and a landing-place. There was a guard in the hut, and they challenged, and the sergeant answered. Then, we went into the hut, where there was a smell of tobacco and whitewash, and a bright fire, and a lamp, and a stand of muskets, and a drum, and a low wooden bedstead, like an overgrown mangle without the machinery, capable of holding about a dozen soldiers all at once. Three or four soldiers who lay upon it in their great-coats, were not much interested in us, but just lifted their heads and took a sleepy stare, and then lay down again. The sergeant made some kind of report, and some entry in a book, and then the convict whom I call the other convict was drafted off with his guard, to go on board first.

My convict never looked at me, except that once. While we stood in the hut, he stood before the fire looking thoughtfully at it, or putting up his feet by turns upon the hob, and looking thoughtfully at them as if he pitied them for their recent adventures. Suddenly, he turned to the sergeant, and remarked:

"I wish to say something respecting this escape. It may prevent some persons laying under suspicion alonger me."

"You can say what you like," returned the sergeant, standing coolly looking at him with his arms folded, "but you have no call to say it here. You'll have opportunity enough to say about it, and hear about it, before it's done with, you know."

"I know, but this is another pint, a separate matter. A man can't starve; at least *I* can't. I took some wittles, up at the willage over yonder — where the church stands a'most out on the marshes."

"You mean stole," said the sergeant.

"And I'll tell you where from. From the blacksmith's."

"Halloa!" said the sergeant, staring at Joe.

"Halloa, Pip!" said Joe, staring at me.

"It was some broken wittles — that's what it was — and a dram of liquor, and a pie."

"Have you happened to miss such an article as a pie, blacksmith?" asked the sergeant, confidentially.

"My wife did, at the very moment when you came in. Don't you know, Pip?"

"So," said my convict, turning his eyes on Joe in a moody manner, and without the least glance at me; "so you're the blacksmith, are you? Then I'm sorry to say, I've eat your pie."

"God knows you're welcome to it — so far as it was ever mine," returned Joe, with a saving remembrance of Mrs. Joe. "We don't know what you have done, but we wouldn't have you starved to death for it, poor miserable fellow-creatur. — Would us, Pip?"

The something that I had noticed before, clicked in the man's throat again, and he turned his back. The boat had returned, and his guard were ready, so we

followed him to the landing-place made of rough stakes and stones, and saw him put into the boat, which was rowed by a crew of convicts like himself. No one seemed surprised to see him, or interested in seeing him, or glad to see him, or sorry to see him, or spoke a word, except that somebody in the boat growled as if to dogs, "Give way, you!" which was the signal for the dip of the oars. By the light of the torches, we saw the black Hulk lying out a little way from the mud of the shore, like a wicked Noah's ark. Cribbed and barred and moored by massive rusty chains, the prison-ship seemed in my young eyes to be ironed like the prisoners. We saw the boat go alongside, and we saw him taken up the side and disappear. Then, the ends of the torches were flung hissing into the water, and went out, as if it were all over with him.

## QUESTIONS

1. By what threat did the convict frighten Pip into getting him what he wanted?
2. On what day of the year did Pip meet the convict in the marshes?
3. Identify Also Georgiana; Mr. Wopsle; Tickler.
4. Explain the unfortunate accident which happened to Uncle Pumblechook at dinner.
5. Why was Pip running out the door when the soldiers arrived? What was the sergeant's chief character trait?
6. How did the soldiers find the convicts?
7. Find five brief humorous passages. Does Dickens rely chiefly on situation, character, or style for his humor?
8. Describe and characterize Mr. and Mrs. Joe Gargery.
9. Describe the two chief settings of this selection. What colors stand out most vividly?
10. What question is left unanswered in your mind about the two convicts?



*"The big Bow-Wow strain I can do myself," said Sir Walter Scott, praising Jane Austen's novels, "but the exquisite touch which renders common-place things and characters interesting . . . is denied to me." Youngest daughter in a Hampshire rector's family of eight children, Jane Austen grew up in the simple, country society she describes in Pride and Prejudice (1813). In fact, Elizabeth Bennet is usually considered a self-portrait of the author in her dark coloring, vivacity, and ironical humor. Jane Austen's other novels are Sense and Sensibility (1811), Mansfield Park (1814), Emma (1816), and the posthumous Northanger Abbey (1818) and Persuasion (1818), published shortly after her death, at age forty-two, of consumption.*

## CHAPTER I

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of someone or other of their daughters.

"My dear Mr. Bennet," said his lady to him one day, "have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?"

Mr. Bennet replied that he had not.

"But it is," returned she; "for Mrs. Long has just been here, and she told me all about it."

Mr. Bennet made no answer.

"Do not you want to know who has taken it?" cried his wife impatiently.

"You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it."

This was invitation enough.

"Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it, that he agreed with Mr. Morris immediately; that he is to take possession before Michaelmas, and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week."

"What is his name?"

"Bingley."

"Is he married or single?"

"Oh! single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!"

"How so? How can it affect them?"

"My dear Mr. Bennet," replied his wife, "how can you be so tiresome! You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them."

"Is that his design in settling here?"

"Design! Nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he *may* fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes."

"I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party."

"My dear, you flatter me. I certainly *have* had my share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be anything extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown-up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty."

"In such cases, a woman has not often much beauty to think of."

"But, my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr. Bingley when he comes into the neighbourhood."

"It is more than I engage for, I assure you."

"But consider your daughters. Only think what an establishment it would be for one of them. Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go, merely on that account, for in general, you know, they visit no newcomers. Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for *us* to visit him if you do not."

"You are over-scrupulous, surely. I dare say Mr. Bingley will be very glad to see you; and I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying whichever he chooses of the girls: though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy."

"I desire you will do no such thing. Lizzy is not a bit better than the others; and I am sure she is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good-humoured as Lydia. But you are always giving *her* the preference."

"They have none of them much to recommend them," replied he; "they are all silly and ignorant, like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters."

"Mr. Bennet, how can you abuse your own children in such a way? You take delight in vexing me. You have no compassion of my poor nerves."

"You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least."

"Ah! You do not know what I suffer."

"But I hope you will get over it, and live to see many young men of four thousand a year come into the neighbourhood."

"It will be no use to us, if twenty such should come, since you will not visit them."

"Depend upon it, my dear, that when there are twenty, I will visit them all."

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character. *Her* mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news.

## CHAPTER II

Mr. Bennet was among the earliest of those who waited on Mr. Bingley. He had always intended to visit him, though to the last always assuring his wife that he should not go; and till the evening after the visit was paid she had no knowledge of it. It was then disclosed in the following manner: — Observing his second daughter employed in trimming a hat, he suddenly addressed her with:

“I hope Mr. Bingley will like it, Lizzy.”

“We are not in a way to know *what* Mr. Bingley likes,” said her mother resentfully, “since we are not to visit.”

“But you forget, mamma,” said Elizabeth, “that we shall meet him at the assemblies, and that Mrs. Long has promised to introduce him.”

“I do not believe Mrs. Long will do any such thing. She has two nieces of her own. She is a selfish, hypocritical woman, and I have no opinion of her.”

“No more have I,” said Mr. Bennet; “and I am glad to find that you do not depend on her serving you.”

Mrs. Bennet deigned not to make any reply, but, unable to contain herself, began scolding one of her daughters.

“Don’t keep coughing so, Kitty, for Heaven’s sake! Have a little compassion on my nerves. You tear them to pieces.”

“Kitty has no discretion in her coughs,” said her father; “she times them ill.”

“I do not cough for my own amusement,” replied Kitty fretfully. “When is your next ball to be, Lizzy?”

“To-morrow fortnight.”

“Aye, so it is,” cried her mother, “and Mrs. Long does not come back till the day before; so it will be impossible for her to introduce him, for she will not know him herself.”

“Then, my dear, you may have the advantage of your friend, and introduce Mr. Bingley to *her*.”

“Impossible, Mr. Bennet, impossible, when I am not acquainted with him myself; how can you be so teasing?”

“I honour your circumspection. A fortnight’s acquaintance is certainly very little. One cannot know what a man really is by the end of a fortnight. But if we do not venture somebody else will; and after all, Mrs. Long and her nieces must

stand their chance; and, therefore, as she will think it an act of kindness, if you decline the office, I will take it on myself."

The girls stared at their father. Mrs. Bennet said only, "Nonsense, nonsense!"

"What can be the meaning of that emphatic exclamation?" cried he. "Do you consider the forms of introduction, and the stress that is laid on them, as nonsense? I cannot quite agree with you *there*. What say you, Mary? For you are a young lady of deep reflection, I know, and read great books and make extracts."

Mary wished to say something very sensible, but knew not how.

"While Mary is adjusting her ideas," he continued, "let us return to Mr. Bingley."

"I am sick of Mr. Bingley," cried his wife.

"I am sorry to hear *that*; but why did not you tell me so before? If I had known as much this morning I certainly would not have called on him. It is very unlucky; but as I have actually paid the visit, we cannot escape the acquaintance now."

The astonishment of the ladies was just what he wished; that of Mrs. Bennet perhaps surpassing the rest; though, when the first tumult of joy was over, she began to declare that it was what she had expected all the while.

"How good it was in you, my dear Mr. Bennet! But I knew I should persuade you at last. I was sure you loved your girls too well to neglect such an acquaintance. Well, how pleased I am! and it is such a good joke, too, that you should have gone this morning and never said a word about it till now."

"Now, Kitty, you may cough as much as you choose," said Mr. Bennet; and, as he spoke, he left the room, fatigued with the raptures of his wife.

"What an excellent father you have, girls!" said she, when the door was shut. "I do not know how you will ever make him amends for his kindness; or me either, for that matter. At our time of life it is not so pleasant, I can tell you, to be making new acquaintances every day; but for your sakes, we would do anything. Lydia, my love, though you *are* the youngest, I dare say Mr. Bingley will dance with you at the next ball."

"Oh!" said Lydia stoutly, "I am not afraid; for though I *am* the youngest, I'm the tallest."

The rest of the evening was spent in conjecturing how soon he would return Mr. Bennet's visit, and determining when they should ask him to dinner.

### CHAPTER III

Not all that Mrs. Bennet, however, with the assistance of her five daughters, could ask on the subject, was sufficient to draw from her husband any satisfactory description of Mr. Bingley. They attacked him in various ways — with bare-faced questions, ingenious suppositions, and distant surmises; but he eluded the skill of them all, and they were at last obliged to accept the second-

hand intelligence of their neighbour, Lady Lucas. Her report was highly favourable. Sir William had been delighted with him. He was quite young, wonderfully handsome, extremely agreeable, and, to crown the whole, he meant to be at the next assembly with a large party. Nothing could be more delightful! To be fond of dancing was a certain step towards falling in love; and very lively hopes of Mr. Bingley's heart were entertained.

"If I can but see one of my daughters happily settled at Netherfield," said Mrs. Bennet to her husband, "and all the others equally well married, I shall have nothing to wish for."

In a few days Mr. Bingley returned Mr. Bennet's visit, and sat about ten minutes with him in his library. He had entertained hopes of being admitted to a sight of the young ladies, of whose beauty he had heard much; but he saw only the father. The ladies were somewhat more fortunate, for they had the advantage of ascertaining from an upper window that he wore a blue coat, and rode a black horse.

An invitation to dinner was soon afterwards dispatched; and already had Mrs. Bennet planned the courses that were to do credit to her housekeeping, when an answer arrived which deferred it all. Mr. Bingley was obliged to be in town the following day, and, consequently, unable to accept the honour of their invitation, etc. Mrs. Bennet was quite disconcerted. She could not imagine what business he could have in town so soon after his arrival in Hertfordshire; and she began to fear that he might be always flying about from one place to another, and never settled at Netherfield as he ought to be. Lady Lucas quieted her fears a little by starting the idea of his being gone to London only to get a large party for the ball; and a report soon followed, that Mr. Bingley was to bring twelve ladies and seven gentlemen with him to the assembly. The girls grieved over such a number of ladies, but were comforted the day before the ball by hearing, that instead of twelve he had brought only six with him from London — his five sisters and a cousin. And when the party entered the assembly room it consisted only of five altogether — Mr. Bingley, his two sisters, the husband of the eldest, and another young man.

Mr. Bingley was good-looking and gentlemanlike; he had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners. His sisters were fine women, with an air of decided fashion. His brother-in-law, Mr. Hurst, merely looked the gentleman; but his friend Mr. Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien, and the report which was in general circulation within five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten thousand a year. The gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man, the ladies declared he was much handsomer than Mr. Bingley, and he was looked at with great admiration for about half the evening, till his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud; to be above his company, and above being pleased; and not all his large estate

in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance, and being unworthy to be compared with his friend.

Mr. Bingley had soon made himself acquainted with all the principal people in the room; he was lively and unreserved, danced every dance, was angry that the ball closed so early, and talked of giving one himself at Netherfield. Such amiable qualities must speak for themselves. What a contrast between him and his friend! Mr. Darcy danced only once with Mrs. Hurst and once with Miss Bingley, declined being introduced to any other lady, and spent the rest of the evening in walking about the room, speaking occasionally to one of his own party. His character was decided. He was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world, and everybody hoped that he would never come there again. Amongst the most violent against him was Mrs. Bennet, whose dislike of his general behaviour was sharpened into particular resentment by his having slighted one of her daughters.

Elizabeth Bennet had been obliged, by the scarcity of gentlemen, to sit down for two dances; and during part of that time, Mr. Darcy had been standing near enough for her to overhear a conversation between him and Mr. Bingley, who came from the dance for a few minutes, to press his friend to join it.

"Come, Darcy," said he, "I must have you dance. I hate to see you standing about by yourself in this stupid manner. You had much better dance."

"I certainly shall not. You know how I detest it, unless I am particularly acquainted with my partner. At such an assembly as this it would be insupportable. Your sisters are engaged, and there is not another woman in the room whom it would not be a punishment to me to stand up with."

"I would not be so fastidious as you are," cried Bingley, "for a kingdom! Upon my honour, I never met with so many pleasant girls in my life as I have this evening; and there are several of them you see uncommonly pretty."

"*You* are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room," said Mr. Darcy, looking at the eldest Miss Bennet.

"Oh! she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld! But there is one of her sisters sitting down just behind you, who is very pretty, and I dare say very agreeable. Do let me ask my partner to introduce you."

"Which do you mean?" and turning round he looked for a moment at Elizabeth, till catching her eye, he withdrew his own and coldly said: "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt *me*; I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men. You had better return to your partner and enjoy her smiles, for you are wasting your time with me."

Mr. Bingley followed his advice. Mr. Darcy walked off; and Elizabeth remained with no very cordial feelings towards him. She told the story, however, with great spirit among her friends; for she had a lively, playful disposition, which delighted in anything ridiculous.

The evening altogether passed off pleasantly to the whole family. Mrs. Bennet had seen her eldest daughter much admired by the Netherfield party. Mr. Bingley had danced with her twice, and she had been distinguished by his sisters. Jane was as much gratified by this as her mother could be, though in a quieter way. Elizabeth felt Jane's pleasure. Mary had heard herself mentioned to Miss Bingley as the most accomplished girl in the neighbourhood; and Catherine and Lydia had been fortunate enough to be never without partners, which was all that they had yet learnt to care for at a ball. They returned, therefore, in good spirits to Longbourn, the village where they lived, and of which they were the principal inhabitants. They found Mr. Bennet still up. With a book he was regardless of time; and on the present occasion he had a good deal of curiosity as to the event of an evening which had raised such splendid expectations. He had rather hoped that all his wife's views on the stranger would be disappointed; but he soon found that he had a very different story to hear.

"Oh! my dear Mr. Bennet," as she entered the room, "we have had a most delightful evening, a most excellent ball. I wish you had been there. Jane was so admired, nothing could be like it. Everybody said how well she looked; and Mr. Bingley thought her quite beautiful, and danced with her twice! Only think of *that*, my dear; he actually danced with her twice! and she was the only creature in the room that he asked a second time. First of all, he asked Miss Lucas. I was so vexed to see him stand up with her! But, however, he did not admire her at all; indeed, nobody can, you know; and he seemed quite struck with Jane as she was going down the dance. So he inquired who she was, and got introduced, and asked her for the two next. Then the two third he danced with Miss King, and the two fourth with Maria Lucas, and the two fifth with Jane again, and the two sixth with Lizzy, and the *Boulangier* —"

"If he had had any compassion for *me*," cried her husband impatiently, "he would not have danced half so much! For God's sake, say no more of his partners. O that he had sprained his ankle in the first place!"

"Oh! my dear," continued Mrs. Bennet, "I am quite delighted with him. He is so excessively handsome! And his sisters are charming women. I never in my life saw anything more elegant than their dresses. I dare say the lace upon Mrs. Hurst's gown —"

Here she was interrupted again. Mr. Bennet protested against any description of finery. She was therefore obliged to seek another branch of the subject, and related, with much bitterness of spirit and some exaggeration, the shocking rudeness of Mr. Darcy.

"But I can assure you," she added, "that Lizzy does not lose much by suiting *his* fancy; for he is a most disagreeable, horrid man, not at all worth pleasing. So high and so conceited that there was no enduring him! He walked here, and he walked there, fancying himself so very great! Not handsome enough to dance with! I wish you had been there, my dear, to have given him one of your set-downs. I quite detest the man."

## CHAPTER IV

When Jane and Elizabeth were alone, the former, who had been cautious in her praise of Mr. Bingley before, expressed to her sister how very much she admired him.

"He is just what a young man ought to be," said she, "sensible, good-humored, lively; and I never saw such happy manners! — so much ease, with such perfect good breeding!"

"He is also handsome," replied Elizabeth; "which a young man ought likewise to be, if he possibly can. His character is thereby complete."

"I was very much flattered by his asking me to dance a second time. I did not expect such a compliment."

"Did not you? *I* did for you. But that is one great difference between us. Compliments always take *you* by surprise, and *me* never. What could be more natural than his asking you again? He could not help seeing that you were about five times as pretty as every other woman in the room. No thanks to his gallantry for that. Well, he certainly is very agreeable, and I give you leave to like him. You have liked many a stupider person."

"Dear Lizzy!"

"Oh! you are a great deal too apt, you know, to like people in general. You never see a fault in anybody. All the world are good and agreeable in your eyes. I never heard you speak ill of a human being in my life."

"I would wish not to be hasty in censuring anyone; but I always speak what I think."

"I know you do; and it is *that* which makes the wonder. With *your* good sense, to be so honestly blind to the follies and nonsense of others! Affectation of candour is common enough — one meets it everywhere. But to be candid without ostentation or design — to take the good of everybody's character and make it still better, and say nothing of the bad — belongs to you alone. And so you like this man's sisters, too, do you? Their manners are not equal to his."

"Certainly not — at first. But they are very pleasing women when you converse with them. Miss Bingley is to live with her brother, and keep his house; and I am much mistaken if we shall not find a very charming neighbour in her."

Elizabeth listened in silence, but was not convinced; their behaviour at the assembly had not been calculated to please in general; and with more quickness of observation and less pliancy of temper than her sister, and with a judgment too unassailed by any attention to herself, she was very little disposed to approve them. They were in fact very fine ladies; not deficient in good humour when they were pleased, nor in the power of being agreeable when they chose it, but proud and conceited. They were rather handsome, had been educated in one of the first private seminaries in town, had a fortune of twenty thousand pounds, were



in the habit of spending more than they ought, and of associating with people of rank, and were therefore in every respect entitled to think well of themselves, and meanly of others. They were of a respectable family in the north of England; a circumstance more deeply impressed on their memories than that their brother's fortune and their own had been acquired by trade.

Mr. Bingley inherited property to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand pounds from his father, who had intended to purchase an estate, but did not live to do it. Mr. Bingley intended it likewise, and sometimes made choice of his county; but as he was now provided with a good house and the liberty of a manor, it was doubtful to many of those who best knew the easiness of his temper, whether he might not spend the remainder of his days at Netherfield, and leave the next generation to purchase.

His sisters were very anxious for his having an estate of his own; but, though he was now established only as a tenant, Miss Bingley was by no means unwilling to preside at his table — nor was Mrs. Hurst, who had married a man of more fashion than fortune, less disposed to consider his house as her home when it suited her. Mr. Bingley had not been of age two years, when he was tempted by an accidental recommendation to look at Netherfield House. He did look at it, and into it for half-an-hour — was pleased with the situation and the principal rooms, satisfied with what the owner said in its praise, and took it immediately.

Between him and Darcy there was a very steady friendship, in spite of great opposition of character. Bingley was endeared to Darcy by the easiness, openness, and ductility of his temper, though no disposition could offer a greater contrast to his own, and though with his own he never appeared dissatisfied. On the strength of Darcy's regard, Bingley had the firmest reliance, and of his judgment the highest opinion. In understanding, Darcy was the superior. Bingley was by no means deficient, but Darcy was clever. He was at the same time haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting. In that respect his friend had greatly the advantage. Bingley was sure of being liked wherever he appeared, Darcy was continually giving offence.

The manner in which they spoke of the Meryton assembly was sufficiently characteristic. Bingley had never met with more pleasant people or prettier girls in his life; everybody had been most kind and attentive to him; there had been no formality, no stiffness; he had soon felt acquainted with all the room; and as to Miss Bennet, he could not conceive an angel more beautiful. Darcy, on the contrary, had seen a collection of people in whom there was little beauty and no fashion, for none of whom he had felt the smallest interest, and from none received either attention or pleasure. Miss Bennet he acknowledged to be pretty, but she smiled too much.

Mrs. Hurst and her sister allowed it to be so — but still they admired her and liked her, and pronounced her to be a sweet girl, and one whom they should

not object to know more of. Miss Bennet was therefore established as a sweet girl, and their brother felt authorised by such commendation to think of her as he chose.

## CHAPTER V

Within a short walk of Longbourn lived a family with whom the Bennets were particularly intimate. Sir William Lucas had been formerly in trade in Meryton, where he had made a tolerable fortune, and risen to the honour of knighthood by an address to the king, during his mayoralty. The distinction had perhaps been felt too strongly. It had given him a disgust to his business, and to his residence in a small market town; and, quitting them both, he had removed with his family to a house about a mile from Meryton, denominated from that period Lucas Lodge, where he could think with pleasure of his own importance, and, unshackled by business, occupy himself solely in being civil to all the world. For, though elated by his rank, it did not render him supercilious; on the contrary, he was all attention to everybody. By nature inoffensive, friendly, and obliging, his presentation at St. James's had made him courteous.

Lady Lucas was a very good kind of woman, not too clever to be a valuable neighbour to Mrs. Bennet. They had several children. The eldest of them, a sensible, intelligent young woman, about twenty-seven, was Elizabeth's intimate friend.

That the Miss Lucases and the Miss Bennets should meet to talk over a ball was absolutely necessary; and the morning after the assembly brought the former to Longbourn to hear and to communicate.

"*You* began the evening well, Charlotte," said Mrs. Bennet with civil self-command to Miss Lucas. "*You* were Mr. Bingley's first choice."

"Yes; but he seemed to like his second better."

"Oh! you mean Jane, I suppose, because he danced with her twice. To be sure that *did* seem as if he admired her — indeed I rather believe he *did* — I heard something about it — but I hardly know what — something about Mr. Robinson."

"Perhaps you mean what I overheard between him and Mr. Robinson; did not I mention it to you? Mr. Robinson's asking him how he liked our Meryton assemblies, and whether he did not think there were a great many pretty women in the room, and *which* he thought the prettiest? and his answering immediately to the last question: 'Oh! the eldest Miss Bennet, beyond a doubt; there cannot be two opinions on that point.'"

"Upon my word! Well, that was very decided indeed — that does seem as if — but, however, it may all come to nothing, you know."

"*My* overhearings were more to the purpose than *yours*, Eliza," said Charlotte. "Mr. Darcy is not so well worth listening to as his friend, is he? — poor Eliza! — to be only just *tolerable*."

"I beg you would not put it into Lizzy's head to be vexed by his ill treatment, for he is such a disagreeable man, that it would be quite a misfortune to be liked by him. Mrs. Long told me last night that he sat close to her for half-an-hour without once opening his lips."

"Are you quite sure, ma'am? — is not there a little mistake?" said Jane. "I certainly saw Mr. Darcy speaking to her."

"Aye — because she asked him at last how he liked Netherfield, and he could not help answering her; but she said he seemed very angry at being spoke to."

"Miss Bingley told me," said Jane, "that he never speaks much, unless among his intimate acquaintances. With *them* he is remarkably agreeable."

"I do not believe a word of it, my dear. If he had been so very agreeable, he would have talked to Mrs. Long. But I can guess how it was; everybody says that he is eat up with pride, and I dare say he had heard somehow that Mrs. Long does not keep a carriage, and had come to the ball in a hack chaise."

"I do not mind his not talking to Mrs. Long," said Miss Lucas, "but I wish he had danced with Eliza."

"Another time, Lizzy," said her mother, "I would not dance with *him*, if I were you."

"I believe, ma'am, I may safely promise you *never* to dance with him."

"His pride," said Miss Lucas, "does not offend *me* so much as pride often does, because there is an excuse for it. One cannot wonder that so very fine a young man, with family, fortune, everything in his favour, should think highly of himself. If I may so express it, he has a *right* to be proud."

"That is very true," replied Elizabeth, "and I could easily forgive *his* pride, if he had not mortified *mine*."

"Pride," observed Mary, who piqued herself upon the solidity of her reflections, "is a very common failing, I believe. By all that I have ever read, I am convinced that it is very common indeed; that human nature is particularly prone to it, and that there are very few of us who do not cherish a feeling of self-complacency on the score of some quality or the other, real or imaginary. Vanity and pride are different things, though the words are often used synonymously. A person may be proud without being vain. Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us."

"If I were as rich as Mr. Darcy," cried a young Lucas, who came with his sisters, "I should not care how proud I was. I would keep a pack of foxhounds, and drink a bottle of wine every day."

"Then you would drink a great deal more than you ought," said Mrs. Bennet; "and if I were to see you at it, I should take away your bottle directly."

The boy protested that she should not; she continued to declare that she would, and the argument ended only with the visit.

## CHAPTER VI

The ladies of Longbourn soon waited on those of Netherfield. The visit was soon returned in due form. Miss Bennet's pleasing manners grew on the goodwill of Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley; and though the mother was found to be intolerable, and the younger sisters not worth speaking to, a wish of being better acquainted with *them* was expressed towards the two eldest. By Jane, this attention was received with the greatest pleasure; but Elizabeth still saw superciliousness in their treatment of everybody, hardly excepting even her sister, and could not like them; though their kindness to Jane, such as it was, had a value as arising in all probability from the influence of their brother's admiration. It was generally evident whenever they met, that he *did* admire her; and to *her* it was equally evident that Jane was yielding to the preference which she had begun to entertain for him from the first, and was in a way to be very much in love; but she considered with pleasure that it was not likely to be discovered by the world in general, since Jane united, with great strength of feeling, a composure of temper and a uniform cheerfulness of manner which would guard her from the suspicions of the impertinent. She mentioned this to her friend Miss Lucas.

"It may perhaps be pleasant," replied Charlotte, "to be able to impose on the public in such a case; but it is sometimes a disadvantage to be so very guarded. If a woman conceals her affection with the same skill from the object of it, she may lose the opportunity of fixing him; and it will then be but poor consolation to believe the world equally in the dark. There is so much of gratitude or vanity in almost every attachment, that it is not safe to leave any to itself. We can all *begin* freely — a slight preference is natural enough: but there are very few of us who have heart enough to be really in love without encouragement. In nine cases out of ten a woman had better show *more* affection than she feels. Bingley likes your sister, undoubtedly; but he may never do more than like her, if she does not help him on."

"But she does help him on, as much as her nature will allow. If *I* can perceive her regard for him, he must be a simpleton, indeed, not to discover it too."

"Remember, Eliza, that he does not know Jane's disposition as you do."

"But if a woman is partial to a man, and does not endeavour to conceal it, he must find it out."

"Perhaps he must, if he sees enough of her. But, though Bingley and Jane meet tolerably often, it is never for many hours together; and as they always see each other in large mixed parties, it is impossible that every moment should be employed in conversing together. Jane should therefore make the most of every half-hour in which she can command his attention. When she is secure of him, there will be leisure for falling in love as much as she chooses."

"Your plan is a good one," replied Elizabeth, "where nothing is in question but the desire of being well married; and if I were determined to get a rich husband, or any husband, I dare say I should adopt it. But these are not Jane's feelings; she is not acting by design. As yet, she cannot even be certain of the degree of her own regard nor of its reasonableness. She has known him only a fortnight. She danced four dances with him at Meryton; she saw him one morning at his own house, and has since dined in company with him four times. This is not quite enough to make her understand his character."

"Not as you represent it. Had she merely *dined* with him, she might only have discovered whether he had a good appetite; but you must remember that four evenings have been also spent together — and four evenings may do a great deal."

"Yes; these four evenings have enabled them to ascertain that they both like *Vingt-un* better than Commerce; but with respect to any other leading characteristic, I do not imagine that much has been unfolded."

"Well," said Charlotte, "I wish Jane success with all my heart; and if she were married to him to-morrow, I should think she had as good a chance of happiness as if she were to be studying his character for a twelvemonth. Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance. If the dispositions of the parties are ever so well known to each other or ever so similar beforehand, it does not advance their felicity in the least. They always continue to grow sufficiently unlike afterwards to have their share of vexation; and it is better to know as little as possible of the defects of the person with whom you are to pass your life."

"You make me laugh, Charlotte; but it is not sound. You know it is not sound, and that you would never act in this way yourself."

Occupied in observing Mr. Bingley's attentions to her sister, Elizabeth was far from suspecting that she was herself becoming an object of some interest in the eyes of his friend. Mr. Darcy had at first scarcely allowed her to be pretty; he had looked at her without admiration at the ball; and when they next met, he looked at her only to criticise. But no sooner had he made it clear to himself and his friends that she had hardly a good feature in her face, than he began to find it was rendered uncommonly intelligent by the beautiful expression of her dark eyes. To this discovery succeeded some others equally mortifying. Though he had detected with a critical eye more than one failure of perfect symmetry in her form, he was forced to acknowledge her figure to be light and pleasing; and in spite of his asserting that her manners were not those of the fashionable world, he was caught by their easy playfulness. Of this was she perfectly unaware; to her he was only the man who made himself agreeable nowhere, and who had not thought her handsome enough to dance with.

He began to wish to know more of her, and as a step towards conversing with her himself, attended to her conversation with others. His doing so drew her notice. It was at Sir William Lucas's, where a large party were assembled.

"What does Mr. Darcy mean," said she to Charlotte, "by listening to my conversation with Colonel Forster?"

"That is a question which Mr. Darcy only can answer."

"But if he does it any more I shall certainly let him know that I see what he is about. He has a very satirical eye, and if I do not begin by being impertinent myself, I shall soon grow afraid of him."

On his approaching them soon afterwards, though without seeming to have any intention of speaking, Miss Lucas defied her friend to mention such a subject to him; which immediately provoking Elizabeth to do it, she turned to him and said:

"Did not you think, Mr. Darcy, that I expressed myself uncommonly well just now, when I was teasing Colonel Forster to give us a ball at Meryton?"

"With great energy; but it is a subject which always makes a lady energetic."

"You are severe on us."

"It will be *her* turn soon to be teased," said Miss Lucas. "I am going to open the instrument, Eliza, and you know what follows."

"You are a very strange creature by way of a friend! — always wanting me to play and sing before anybody and everybody! If my vanity had taken a musical turn, you would have been invaluable; but as it is, I would really rather not sit down before those who must be in the habit of hearing the very best performers." On Miss Lucas's persevering, however, she added, "Very well; if it must be so, it must." And gravely glancing at Mr. Darcy, "There is a fine old saying, which everybody here is of course familiar with: 'Keep your breath to cool your porridge'; and I shall keep mine to swell my song."

Her performance was pleasing, though by no means capital. After a song or two, and before she could reply to the entreaties of several that she would sing again, she was eagerly succeeded at the instrument by her sister Mary, who having, in consequence of being the only plain one in the family, worked hard for knowledge and accomplishments, was always impatient for display.

Mary had neither genius nor taste; and though vanity had given her application, it had given her likewise a pedantic air and conceited manner, which would have injured a higher degree of excellence than she had reached. Elizabeth, easy and unaffected, had been listened to with much more pleasure, though not playing half so well; and Mary, at the end of a long concerto, was glad to purchase praise and gratitude by Scotch and Irish airs, at the request of her younger sisters, who, with some of the Lucases, and two or three officers, joined eagerly in dancing at one end of the room.

Mr. Darcy stood near them in silent indignation at such a mode of passing the evening, to the exclusion of all conversation, and was too much engrossed by his thoughts to perceive that Sir William Lucas was his neighbour, till Sir William thus began:

"What a charming amusement for young people this is, Mr. Darcy! There is

nothing like dancing after all. I consider it as one of the first refinements of polished societies."

"Certainly, sir; and it has the advantage also of being in vogue amongst the less polished societies of the world. Every savage can dance."

Sir William only smiled. "Your friend performs delightfully," he continued after a pause, on seeing Bingley join the group; "and I doubt not that you are an adept in the science yourself, Mr. Darcy."

"You saw me dance at Meryton, I believe, sir."

"Yes, indeed, and received no inconsiderable pleasure from the sight. Do you often dance at St. James's?"

"Never, sir."

"Do you not think it would be a proper compliment to the place?"

"It is a compliment which I never pay to any place if I can avoid it."

"You have a house in town, I conclude?"

Mr. Darcy bowed.

"I had once some thoughts of fixing in town myself — for I am fond of superior society; but I did not feel quite certain that the air of London would agree with Lady Lucas."

He paused in hopes of an answer; but his companion was not disposed to make any; and Elizabeth at that instant moving towards them, he was struck with the action of doing a very gallant thing, and called out to her:

"My dear Miss Eliza, why are not you dancing? Mr. Darcy, you must allow me to present this young lady to you as a very desirable partner. You cannot refuse to dance, I am sure, when so much beauty is before you." And, taking her hand, he would have given it to Mr. Darcy who, though extremely surprised, was not unwilling to receive it, when she instantly drew back, and said with some discomposure to Sir William:

"Indeed, sir, I have not the least intention of dancing. I entreat you not to suppose that I moved this way in order to beg for a partner."

Mr. Darcy, with grave propriety, requested to be allowed the honour of her hand, but in vain. Elizabeth was determined; nor did Sir William at all shake her purpose by his attempt at persuasion.

"You excel so much in the dance, Miss Eliza, that it is cruel to deny me the happiness of seeing you; and though this gentleman dislikes the amusement in general, he can have no objection, I am sure, to oblige us for one half-hour."

"Mr. Darcy is all politeness," said Elizabeth, smiling.

"He is indeed; but considering the inducement, my dear Miss Eliza, we cannot wonder at his complaisance — for who would object to such a partner?"

Elizabeth looked archly, and turned away. Her resistance had not injured her with the gentleman, and he was thinking of her with some complacency, when thus accosted by Miss Bingley:

"I can guess the subject of your reverie."

"I should imagine not."

"You are considering how insupportable it would be to pass many evenings in this manner — in such society; and indeed I am quite of your opinion. I was never more annoyed! The insipidity, and yet the noise — the nothingness, and yet the self-importance of all those people! What would I give to hear your strictures on them!"

"Your conjecture is totally wrong, I assure you. My mind was more agreeably engaged. I have been meditating on the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow."

Miss Bingley immediately fixed her eyes on his face, and desired he would tell her what lady had the credit of inspiring such reflections. Mr. Darcy replied with great intrepidity:

"Miss Elizabeth Bennet."

"Miss Elizabeth Bennet!" repeated Miss Bingley. "I am all astonishment. How long has she been such a favourite? — and pray, when am I to wish you joy?"

"That is exactly the question which I expected you to ask. A lady's imagination is very rapid; it jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony, in a moment. I knew you would be wishing me joy."

"Nay, if you are serious about it, I shall consider the matter is absolutely settled. You will have a charming mother-in-law, indeed; and, of course, she will be always at Pemberley with you."

He listened to her with perfect indifference while she chose to entertain herself in this manner; and as his composure convinced her that all was safe, her wit flowed long.

## CHAPTER VII

Mr. Bennet's property consisted almost entirely in an estate of two thousand a year, which, unfortunately for his daughters, was entailed, in default of heirs male, on a distant relation; and their mother's fortune, though ample for her situation in life, could but ill supply the deficiency of his. Her father had been an attorney in Meryton, and had left her four thousand pounds.

She had a sister married to a Mr. Philips, who had been a clerk to their father and succeeded him in the business, and a brother settled in London in a respectable line of trade.

The village of Longbourn was only one mile from Meryton; a most convenient distance for the young ladies, who were usually tempted thither three or four times a week, to pay their duty to their aunt and to a milliner's shop just over the way. The two youngest of the family, Catherine and Lydia, were particularly frequent in these attentions; their minds were more vacant than their sisters', and when nothing better offered, a walk to Meryton was necessary to amuse their morning hours and furnish conversation for the evening; and



however bare of news the country in general might be, they always contrived to learn some from their aunt. At present, indeed, they were well supplied both with news and happiness by the recent arrival of a militia regiment in the neighbourhood; it was to remain the whole winter, and Meryton was the headquarters.

Their visits to Mrs. Philips were now productive of the most interesting intelligence. Every day added something to their knowledge of the officers' names and connections. Their lodgings were not long a secret, and at length they began to know the officers themselves. Mr. Philips visited them all, and this opened to his nieces a source of felicity unknown before. They could talk of nothing but officers; and Mr. Bingley's large fortune, the mention of which gave animation to their mother, was worthless in their eyes when opposed to the regimentals of an ensign.

After listening one morning to their effusions on this subject, Mr. Bennet coolly observed:

"From all that I can collect by your manner of talking, you must be two of the silliest girls in the country. I have suspected it some time, but I am now convinced."

Catherine was disconcerted, and made no answer; but Lydia, with perfect indifference, continued to express her admiration of Captain Carter, and her hope of seeing him in the course of the day, as he was going the next morning to London.

"I am astonished, my dear," said Mrs. Bennet, "that you should be so ready to think your own children silly. If I wished to think slightly of anybody's children, it should not be of my own, however."

"If my children are silly, I must hope to be always sensible of it."

"Yes — but as it happens, they are all of them very clever."

"This is the only point, I flatter myself, on which we do not agree. I had hoped that our sentiments coincided in every particular, but I must so far differ from you as to think our two youngest daughters uncommonly foolish."

"My dear Mr. Bennet, you must not expect such girls to have the sense of their father and mother. When they get to our age, I dare say they will not think about officers any more than we do. I remember the time when I liked a red coat myself very well — and, indeed, so I do still at my heart; and if a smart young colonel, with five or six thousand a year, should want one of my girls I shall not say nay to him; and I thought Colonel Forster looked very becoming the other night at Sir William's in his regimentals."

"Mamma," cried Lydia, "my aunt says that Colonel Forster and Captain Carter do not go so often to Miss Watson's as they did when they first came; she sees them now very often standing in Clarke's library."

Mrs. Bennet was prevented replying by the entrance of the footman with a note for Miss Bennet; it came from Netherfield, and the servant waited for an

answer. Mrs. Bennet's eyes sparkled with pleasure, and she was eagerly calling out, while her daughter read:

"Well, Jane, who is it from? What is it about? What does he say? Well, Jane, make haste and tell us; make haste, my love."

"It is from Miss Bingley," said Jane, and then read it aloud.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"If you are not so compassionate as to dine to-day with Louisa and me, we shall be in danger of hating each other for the rest of our lives, for a whole day's *tête-à-tête* between two women can never end without a quarrel. Come as soon as you can on receipt of this. My brother and the gentlemen are to dine with the officers.

"Yours ever,

"CAROLINE BINGLEY."

"With the officers!" cried Lydia. "I wonder my aunt did not tell us of *that*."

"Dining out," said Mrs. Bennet, "that is very unlucky."

"Can I have the carriage?" said Jane.

"No, my dear, you had better go on horseback, because it seems likely to rain; and then you must stay all night."

"That would be a good scheme," said Elizabeth, "if you were sure that they would not offer to send her home."

"Oh! but the gentlemen will have Mr. Bingley's chaise to go to Meryton; and the Hursts have no horses to theirs."

"I had much rather go in the coach."

"But, my dear, your father cannot spare the horses, I am sure. They are wanted in the farm, Mr. Bennet, are not they?"

"They are wanted in the farm much oftener than I can get them."

"But if you have got them to-day," said Elizabeth, "my mother's purpose will be answered."

She did at last extort from her father an acknowledgment that the horses were engaged; Jane was therefore obliged to go on horseback, and her mother attended her to the door with many cheerful prognostics of a bad day. Her hopes were answered; Jane had not been gone long before it rained hard. Her sisters were uneasy for her, but her mother was delighted. The rain continued the whole evening without intermission; Jane certainly could not come back.

"This was a lucky idea of mine, indeed!" said Mrs. Bennet more than once, as if the credit of making it rain were all her own. Till the next morning, however, she was not aware of all the felicity of her contrivance. Breakfast was scarcely over when a servant from Netherfield brought the following note for Elizabeth:

"MY DEAREST LIZZY,

"I FIND myself very unwell this morning, which, I suppose, is to be imputed to my getting wet through yesterday. My kind friends will not hear of my returning home till I am better,

They insist also on my seeing Mr. Jones — therefore do not be alarmed if you should hear of his having been to me — and, excepting a sore throat and headache, there is not much the matter with me.

“Yours, etc.

“Well, my dear,” said Mr. Bennet, when Elizabeth had read the note aloud, “if your daughter should have a dangerous fit of illness — if she should die, it would be a comfort to know that it was all in pursuit of Mr. Bingley, and under your orders.”

“Oh! I am not at all afraid of her dying. People do not die of little trifling colds. She will be taken good care of. As long as she stays there, it is all very well. I would go and see her if I could have the carriage.”

Elizabeth, feeling really anxious, was determined to go to her, though the carriage was not to be had; and as she was no horsewoman, walking was her only alternative. She declared her resolution.

“How can you be so silly,” cried her mother, “as to think of such a thing, in all this dirt! You will not be fit to be seen when you get there.”

“I shall be very fit to see Jane — which is all I want.”

“Is this a hint to me, Lizzy,” said her father, “to send for the horses?”

“No, indeed. I do not wish to avoid the walk. The distance is nothing when one has a motive; only three miles. I shall be back by dinner.”

“I admire the activity of your benevolence,” observed Mary, “but every impulse of feeling should be guided by reason; and, in my opinion, exertion should always be in proportion to what is required.”

“We will go as far as Meryton with you,” said Catherine and Lydia. Elizabeth accepted their company, and the three young ladies set off together.

“If we make haste,” said Lydia, as they walked along, “perhaps we may see something of Captain Carter before he goes.”

In Meryton they parted; the two youngest repaired to the lodgings of one of the officers’ wives, and Elizabeth continued her walk alone, crossing field after field at a quick pace, jumping over stiles and springing over puddles with impatient activity, and finding herself at last within view of the house, with weary ankles, dirty stockings, and a face glowing with the warmth of exercise.

She was shown into the breakfast-parlour, where all but Jane were assembled, and where her appearance created a great deal of surprise. That she should have walked three miles so early in the day, in such dirty weather, and by herself, was almost incredible to Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley; and Elizabeth was convinced that they held her in contempt for it. She was received, however, very politely by them; and in their brother’s manners there was something better than politeness; there was good humour and kindness. Mr. Darcy said very little, and Mr. Hurst nothing at all. The former was divided between admiration of the brilliancy which exercise had given to her complexion, and doubt as to the occasion’s justifying her coming so far alone. The latter was thinking only of his breakfast.

Her inquiries after her sister were not very favourably answered. Miss Bennet had slept ill, and though up, was very feverish, and not well enough to leave her room. Elizabeth was glad to be taken to her immediately; and Jane, who had only been withheld by the fear of giving alarm or inconvenience from expressing in her note how much she longed for such a visit, was delighted at her entrance. She was not equal, however, to much conversation, and when Miss Bingley left them together, could attempt little besides expressions of gratitude for the extraordinary kindness she was treated with. Elizabeth silently attended her.

When breakfast was over they were joined by the sisters; and Elizabeth began to like them herself, when she saw how much affection and solicitude they showed for Jane. The apothecary came, and having examined his patient, said, as might be supposed, that she had caught a violent cold, and that they must endeavour to get the better of it; advised her to return to bed, and promised her some draughts. The advice was followed readily, for the feverish symptoms increased, and her head ached acutely. Elizabeth did not quit her room for a moment; nor were the other ladies often absent; the gentlemen being out, they had, in fact, nothing to do elsewhere.

When the clock struck three, Elizabeth felt that she must go, and very unwillingly said so. Miss Bingley offered her the carriage, and she only wanted a little pressing to accept it, when Jane testified such concern in parting with her, that Miss Bingley was obliged to convert the offer of the chaise into an invitation to remain at Netherfield for the present. Elizabeth most thankfully consented, and a servant was dispatched to Longbourn to acquaint the family with her stay and bring back a supply of clothes.

## CHAPTER VIII

At five o'clock the two ladies retired to dress, and at half-past six Elizabeth was summoned to dinner. To the civil inquiries which then poured in, and amongst which she had the pleasure of distinguishing the much superior solicitude of Mr. Bingley's, she could not make a very favourable answer. Jane was by no means better. The sisters, on hearing this, repeated three or four times how much they were grieved, how shocking it was to have a bad cold, and how excessively they disliked being ill themselves; and then thought no more of the matter: and their indifference towards Jane when not immediately before them restored Elizabeth to the enjoyment of all her original dislike.

Their brother, indeed, was the only one of the party whom she could regard with any complacency. His anxiety for Jane was evident, and his attentions to herself most pleasing, and they prevented her feeling herself so much an intruder as she believed she was considered by the others. She had very little notice from any but him. Miss Bingley was engrossed by Mr. Darcy, her sister scarcely less so; and as for Mr. Hurst, by whom Elizabeth sat, he was an indolent man,

who lived only to eat, drink, and play at cards; who, when he found her prefer a plain dish to a ragout, had nothing to say to her.

When dinner was over, she returned directly to Jane, and Miss Bingley began abusing her as soon as she was out of the room. Her manners were pronounced to be very bad indeed, a mixture of pride and impertinence; she had no conversation, no style, no taste, no beauty. Mrs. Hurst thought the same, and added:

"She has nothing, in short, to recommend her, but being an excellent walker. I shall never forget her appearance this morning. She really looked almost wild."

"She did, indeed, Louisa. I could hardly keep my countenance. Very nonsensical to come at all! Why must *she* be scampering about the country, because her sister had a cold? Her hair, so untidy, so blowsy!"

"Yes, and her petticoat; I hope you saw her petticoat, six inches deep in mud, I am absolutely certain; and the gown which had been let down to hide it not doing its office."

"Your picture may be very exact, Louisa," said Bingley; "but this was all lost upon me. I thought Miss Elizabeth Bennet looked remarkably well when she came into the room this morning. Her dirty petticoat quite escaped my notice."

"*You* observed it, Mr. Darcy, I am sure," said Miss Bingley; "and I am inclined to think that you would not wish to see *your sister* make such an exhibition."

"Certainly not."

"To walk three miles, or four miles, or five miles, or whatever it is, above her ankles in dirt, and alone, quite alone! What could she mean by it? It seems to me to show an abominable sort of conceited independence, a most country-town indifference to decorum."

"It shows an affection for her sister that is very pleasing," said Bingley.

"I am afraid, Mr. Darcy," observed Miss Bingley, in a half whisper, "that this adventure has rather affected your admiration of her fine eyes."

"Not at all," he replied; "they were brightened by the exercise." A short pause followed this speech, and Mrs. Hurst began again:

"I have an excessive regard for Jane Bennet, she is really a very sweet girl, and I wish with all my heart she were well settled. But with such a father and mother, and such low connections, I am afraid there is no chance of it."

"I think I have heard you say that their uncle is an attorney in Meryton."

"Yes; and they have another, who lives somewhere near Cheapside."

"That is capital," added her sister, and they both laughed heartily.

"If they had uncles enough to fill *all* Cheapside," cried Bingley, "it would not make them one jot less agreeable."

"But it must very materially lessen their chance of marrying men of any consideration in the world," replied Darcy.

To this speech Bingley made no answer; but his sisters gave it their hearty assent, and indulged their mirth for some time at the expense of their dear friend's vulgar relations.

With a renewal of tenderness, however, they repaired to her room on leaving the dining-parlour, and sat with her till summoned to coffee. She was still very poorly, and Elizabeth would not quit her at all, till late in the evening, when she had the comfort of seeing her sleep, and when it appeared to her rather right than pleasant that she should go downstairs herself. On entering the drawing-room she found the whole party at loo, and was immediately invited to join them; but suspecting them to be playing high, she declined it, and making her sister the excuse, said she would amuse herself, for the short time she could stay below, with a book. Mr. Hurst looked at her with astonishment.

"Do you prefer reading to cards?" said he; "that is rather singular."

"Miss Eliza Bennet," said Miss Bingley, "despises cards. She is a great reader, and has no pleasure in anything else."

"I deserve neither such praise nor such censure," cried Elizabeth; "I am *not* a great reader, and I have pleasure in many things."

"In nursing your sister I am sure you have pleasure," said Bingley; "and I hope it will soon be increased by seeing her quite well."

Elizabeth thanked him from her heart, and then walked towards a table where a few books were lying. He immediately offered to fetch others — all that his library afforded.

"And I wish my collection were larger for your benefit and my own credit; but I am an idle fellow, and though I have not many, I have more than I ever look into."

Elizabeth assured him that she could suit herself perfectly with those in the room.

"I am astonished," said Miss Bingley, "that my father should have left so small a collection of books. What a delightful library you have at Pemberley, Mr. Darcy!"

"It ought to be good," he replied, "it has been the work of many generations."

"And then you have added so much to it yourself, you are always buying books."

"I cannot comprehend the neglect of a family library in such days as these."

"Neglect! I am sure you neglect nothing that can add to the beauties of that noble place. Charles, when you build *your* house, I wish it may be half as delightful as Pemberley."

"I wish it may."

"But I would really advise you to make your purchase in that neighbourhood, and take Pemberley for a kind of model. There is not a finer county in England than Derbyshire."

"With all my heart; I will buy Pemberley itself if Darcy will sell it."

"I am talking of possibilities, Charles."

"Upon my word, Caroline, I should think it more possible to get Pemberley by purchase than by imitation."

Elizabeth was so much caught by what passed, as to leave her very little attention for her book; and soon laying it wholly aside, she drew near the card-table, and stationed herself between Mr. Bingley and his eldest sister, to observe the game.

"Is Miss Darcy much grown since the spring?" said Miss Bingley; "will she be as tall as I am?"

"I think she will. She is now about Miss Elizabeth Bennet's height, or rather taller."

"How I long to see her again! I never met with anybody who delighted me so much. Such a countenance, such manners! And so extremely accomplished for her age! Her performance on the pianoforte is exquisite."

"It is amazing to me," said Bingley, "how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished as they all are."

"All young ladies accomplished! My dear Charles, what do you mean?"

"Yes, all of them, I think. They all paint tables, cover screens, and net purses. I scarcely know anyone who cannot do all this, and I am sure I never heard a young lady spoken of for the first time, without being informed that she was very accomplished."

"Your list of the common extent of accomplishments," said Darcy, "has too much truth. The word is applied to many a woman who deserves it no otherwise than by netting a purse or covering a screen. But I am very far from agreeing with you in your estimation of ladies in general. I cannot boast of knowing more than half-a-dozen, in the whole range of my acquaintance, that are really accomplished."

"Nor I, I am sure," said Miss Bingley.

"Then," observed Elizabeth, "you must comprehend a great deal in your idea of an accomplished woman."

"Yes, I do comprehend a great deal in it."

"Oh! certainly," cried his faithful assistant, "no one can be really esteemed accomplished who does not greatly surpass what is usually met with. A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half deserved."

"All this she must possess," added Darcy, "and to all this she must yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading."

"I am no longer surprised at your knowing *only* six accomplished women. I rather wonder now at your knowing *any*."

"Are you so severe upon your own sex as to doubt the possibility of all this?"

"I never saw such a woman. *I* never saw such capacity, and taste, and application, and elegance, as you describe united."

Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley both cried out against the injustice of her implied doubt, and were both protesting that they knew many women who answered this description, when Mr. Hurst called them to order, with bitter complaints of their inattention to what was going forward. As all conversation was thereby at an end, Elizabeth soon afterwards left the room.

"Eliza Bennet," said Miss Bingley, when the door was closed on her, "is one of those young ladies who seek to recommend themselves to the other sex by undervaluing their own; and with many men, I dare say, it succeeds. But, in my opinion, it is a paltry device, a very mean art."

"Undoubtedly," replied Darcy, to whom this remark was chiefly addressed, "there is meanness in *all* the arts which ladies sometimes condescend to employ for captivation. Whatever bears affinity to cunning is despicable."

Miss Bingley was not so entirely satisfied with this reply as to continue the subject.

Elizabeth joined them again only to say that her sister was worse, and that she could not leave her. Bingley urged Mr. Jones being sent for immediately; while his sisters, convinced that no country advice could be of any service, recommended an express to town for one of the most eminent physicians. This she would not hear of; but she was not so unwilling to comply with their brother's proposal; and it was settled that Mr. Jones should be sent for early in the morning, if Miss Bennet were not decidedly better. Bingley was quite uncomfortable; his sisters declared that they were miserable. They solaced their wretchedness, however, by duets after supper, while he could find no better relief to his feelings than by giving his housekeeper directions that every possible attention might be paid to the sick lady and her sister.

## CHAPTER IX

Elizabeth passed the chief of the night in her sister's room, and in the morning had the pleasure of being able to send a tolerable answer to the inquiries which she very early received from Mr. Bingley by a housemaid, and some time afterwards from the two elegant ladies who waited on his sisters. In spite of this amendment, however, she requested to have a note sent to Longbourn, desiring her mother to visit Jane, and form her own judgment of her situation. The note was immediately dispatched, and its contents as quickly complied with. Mrs. Bennet, accompanied by her two youngest girls, reached Netherfield soon after the family breakfast.

Had she found Jane in any apparent danger, Mrs. Bennet would have been very miserable; but being satisfied on seeing her that her illness was not alarm-



ing, she had no wish of her recovering immediately, as her restoration to health would probably remove her from Netherfield. She would not listen, therefore, to her daughter's proposal of being carried home; neither did the apothecary, who arrived about the same time, think it at all advisable. After sitting a little while with Jane, on Miss Bingley's appearance and invitation, the mother and three daughters all attended her into the breakfast-parlour. Bingley met them with hopes that Mrs. Bennet had not found Miss Bennet worse than she expected.

"Indeed I have, sir," was her answer. "She is a great deal too ill to be moved. Mr. Jones says we must not think of moving her. We must trespass a little longer on your kindness."

"Removed!" cried Bingley. "It must not be thought of. My sister, I am sure, will not hear of her removal."

"You may depend upon it, madam," said Miss Bingley, with cold civility, "that Miss Bennet shall receive every possible attention while she remains with us."

Mrs. Bennet was profuse in her acknowledgments.

"I am sure," she added, "if it was not for such good friends I do not know what would become of her, for she is very ill indeed, and suffers a vast deal, though with the greatest patience in the world, which is always the way with her, for she has, without exception, the sweetest temper I ever met with. I often tell my other girls they are nothing to *her*. You have a sweet room here, Mr. Bingley, and a charming prospect over the gravel walk. I do not know a place in the country that is equal to Netherfield. You will not think of quitting it in a hurry, I hope, though you have but a short lease."

"Whatever I do is done in a hurry," replied he; "and therefore if I should resolve to quit Netherfield, I should probably be off in five minutes. At present, however, I consider myself as quite fixed here."

"That is exactly what I should have supposed of you," said Elizabeth.

"You begin to comprehend me, do you?" cried he, turning towards her.

"Oh! yes — I understand you perfectly."

"I wish I might take this for a compliment; but to be so easily seen through I am afraid is pitiful."

"That is as it happens. It does not necessarily follow that a deep, intricate character is more or less estimable than such a one as yours."

"Lizzy," cried her mother, "remember where you are, and do not run on in the wild manner that you are suffered to do at home."

"I did not know before," continued Bingley immediately, "that you were a studier of character. It must be an amusing study."

"Yes, but intricate characters are the *most* amusing. They have at least that advantage."

"The country," said Darcy, "can in general supply but a few subjects for

such a study. In a country neighbourhood you move in a very confined and unvarying society."

"But people themselves alter so much, that there is something new to be observed in them for ever."

"Yes, indeed," cried Mrs. Bennet, offended by his manner of mentioning a country neighbourhood. "I assure you there is quite as much of *that* going on in the country as in town."

Everybody was surprised, and Darcy, after looking at her for a moment, turned silently away. Mrs. Bennet, who fancied she had gained a complete victory over him, continued her triumph.

"I cannot see that London has any great advantage over the country, for my part, except the shops and public places. The country is a vast deal pleasanter, is not it, Mr. Bingley?"

"When I am in the country," he replied, "I never wish to leave it; and when I am in town it is pretty much the same. They have each their advantages, and I can be equally happy in either."

"Aye — that is because you have the right disposition. But that gentleman," looking at Darcy, "seemed to think the country was nothing at all."

"Indeed, mamma, you are mistaken," said Elizabeth, blushing for her mother. "You quite mistook Mr. Darcy. He only meant that there was not such a variety of people to be met with in the country as in town, which you must acknowledge to be true."

"Certainly, my dear, nobody said there were; but as to not meeting with many people in this neighbourhood, I believe there are few neighbourhoods larger. I know we dine with four-and-twenty families."

Nothing but concern for Elizabeth could enable Bingley to keep his countenance. His sister was less delicate, and directed her eyes towards Mr. Darcy with a very expressive smile. Elizabeth, for the sake of saying something that might turn her mother's thoughts, now asked her if Charlotte Lucas had been at Longbourn since *her* coming away.

"Yes, she called yesterday with her father. What an agreeable man Sir William is, Mr. Bingley — is not he? So much the man of fashion! So genteel and so easy! He had always something to say to everybody. *That* is my idea of good breeding; and those persons who fancy themselves very important, and never open their mouths, quite mistake the matter."

"Did Charlotte dine with you?"

"No, she would go home. I fancy she was wanted about the mince-pies. For my part, Mr. Bingley, *I* always keep servants that can do their own work; *my* daughters are brought up differently. But everybody is to judge for themselves, and the Lucases are a very good sort of girls, I assure you. It is a pity they are not handsome! Not that *I* think Charlotte so *very* plain — but then she is our particular friend."

"She seems a very pleasant young woman," said Bingley.

"Oh! dear, yes; but you must own she is very plain. Lady Lucas herself has often said so, and envied me Jane's beauty. I do not like to boast of my own child, but to be sure, Jane — one does not often see anybody better looking. It is what everybody says. I do not trust my own partiality. When she was only fifteen, there was a gentleman at my brother Gardiner's in town so much in love with her that my sister-in-law was sure he would make her an offer before we came away. But, however, he did not. Perhaps he thought her too young. However, he wrote some verses on her, and very pretty they were."

"And so ended his affection," said Elizabeth impatiently. "There has been many a one, I fancy, overcome in the same way. I wonder who first discovered the efficacy of poetry in driving away love!"

"I have been used to consider poetry as the *food* of love," said Darcy.

"Of a fine, stout, healthy love it may. Everything nourishes what is strong already. But if it be only a slight, thin sort of inclination, I am convinced that one good sonnet will starve it entirely away."

Darcy only smiled; and the general pause which ensued made Elizabeth tremble lest her mother should be exposing herself again. She longed to speak, but could think of nothing to say; and after a short silence Mrs. Bennet began repeating her thanks to Mr. Bingley for his kindness to Jane, with an apology for troubling him also with Lizzy. Mr. Bingley was unaffectedly civil in his answer, and forced his younger sister to be civil also, and say what the occasion required. She performed her part indeed without much graciousness, but Mrs. Bennet was satisfied, and soon afterwards ordered her carriage. Upon this signal, the youngest of her daughters put herself forward. The two girls had been whispering to each other during the whole visit, and the result of it was, that the youngest should tax Mr. Bingley with having promised on his first coming into the country to give a ball at Netherfield.

Lydia was a stout, well-grown girl of fifteen, with a fine complexion and good-humoured countenance; a favourite with her mother, whose affection had brought her into public at an early age. She had high animal spirits, and a sort of natural self-consequence, which the attention of the officers, to whom her uncle's good dinners and her own easy manners recommended her, had increased into assurance. She was very equal, therefore, to address Mr. Bingley on the subject of the ball, and abruptly reminded him of his promise; adding, that it would be the most shameful thing in the world if he did not keep it. His answer to this sudden attack was delightful to her mother's ear:

"I am perfectly ready, I assure you, to keep my engagement; and when your sister is recovered, you shall, if you please, name the very day of the ball. But you would not wish to be dancing while she is ill."

Lydia declared herself satisfied. "Oh! yes — it would be much better to wait till Jane was well, and by that time most likely Captain Carter would be

at Meryton again. And when you have given *your* ball," she added, "I shall insist on their giving one also. I shall tell Colonel Forster it will be quite a shame if he does not."

Mrs. Bennet and her daughters then departed, and Elizabeth returned instantly to Jane, leaving her own and her relations' behaviour to the remarks of the two ladies and Mr. Darcy; the latter of whom, however, could not be prevailed on to join in their censure of *her*, in spite of all Miss Bingley's witticisms on *fine eyes*.

## CHAPTER X

The day passed much as the day before had done. Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley had spent some hours of the morning with the invalid, who continued, though slowly, to mend; and in the evening Elizabeth joined their party in the drawing-room. The loo-table, however, did not appear. Mr. Darcy was writing, and Miss Bingley, seated near him, was watching the progress of his letter and repeatedly calling off his attention by messages to his sister. Mr. Hurst and Mr. Bingley were at piquet, and Mrs. Hurst was observing their game.

Elizabeth took up some needlework, and was sufficiently amused in attending to what passed between Darcy and his companion. The perpetual commendations of the lady, either on his handwriting, or on the evenness of his lines, or on the length of his letter, with the perfect unconcern with which her praises were received, formed a curious dialogue, and was exactly in unison with her opinion of each.

"How delighted Miss Darcy will be to receive such a letter!"

He made no answer.

"You write uncommonly fast."

"You are mistaken. I write rather slowly."

"How many letters you must have occasion to write in the course of a year! Letters of business, too! How odious I should think them!"

"It is fortunate, then, that they fall to my lot instead of to yours."

"Pray tell your sister that I long to see her."

"I have already told her so once, by your desire."

"I am afraid you do not like your pen. Let me mend it for you. I mend pens remarkably well."

"Thank you — but I always mend my own."

"How can you contrive to write so even?"

He was silent.

"Tell your sister I am delighted to hear of her improvement on the harp; and pray let her know that I am quite in raptures with her beautiful little design for a table, and I think it infinitely superior to Miss Grantley's."

"Will you give me leave to defer your raptures till I write again? At present I have not room to do them justice."

"Oh! It is of no consequence. I shall see her in January. But do you always write such charming long letters to her, Mr. Darcy?"

"They are generally long; but whether always charming it is not for me to determine."

"It is a rule with me, that a person who can write a long letter with ease, cannot write ill."

"That will not do for a compliment to Darcy, Caroline," cried her brother, "because he does not write with ease. He studies too much for words of four syllables. Do not you, Darcy?"

"My style of writing is very different from yours."

"Oh!" cried Miss Bingley, "Charles writes in the most careless way imaginable. He leaves out half his words, and blots the rest."

"My ideas flow so rapidly that I have not time to express them — by which means my letters sometimes convey no ideas at all to my correspondents."

"Your humility, Mr. Bingley," said Elizabeth, "must disarm reproof."

"Nothing is more deceitful," said Darcy, "than the appearance of humility. It is often only carelessness of opinion, and sometimes an indirect boast."

"And which of the two do you call *my* little recent piece of modesty?"

"The indirect boast; for you are really proud of your defects in writing, because you consider them as proceeding from a rapidity of thought and carelessness of execution, which, if not estimable, you think at least highly interesting. The power of doing anything with quickness is always much prized by the possessor, and often without any attention to the imperfection of the performance. When you told Mrs. Bennet this morning, that if you ever resolved on quitting Netherfield you should be gone in five minutes, you meant it to be a sort of panegyric, of compliment to yourself — and yet what is there so very laudable in a precipitance which must leave very necessary business undone, and can be of no real advantage to yourself or anyone else?"

"Nay," cried Bingley, "this is too much, to remember at night all the foolish things that were said in the morning. And yet, upon my honour, I believed what I said of myself to be true, and I believe it at this moment. At least, therefore, I did not assume the character of needless precipitance merely to show off before the ladies."

"I dare say you believed it; but I am by no means convinced that you would be gone with such celerity. Your conduct would be quite as dependent on chance as that of any man I know; and if, as you were mounting your horse, a friend were to say, 'Bingley, you had better stay till next week,' you would probably do it, you would probably not go — and at another word, might stay a month."

"You have only proved by this," cried Elizabeth, "that Mr. Bingley did not do justice to his own disposition. You have shown him off now much more than he did himself."

"I am exceedingly gratified," said Bingley, "by your converting what my friend says into a compliment on the sweetness of my temper. But I am afraid you are giving it a turn which that gentleman did by no means intend; for he would certainly think the better of me, if under such a circumstance I were to give a flat denial, and ride off as fast as I could."

"Would Mr. Darcy then consider the rashness of your original intention as atoned for by your obstinacy in adhering to it?"

"Upon my word, I cannot exactly explain the matter; Darcy must speak for himself."

"You expect me to account for opinions which you choose to call mine, but which I have never acknowledged. Allowing the case, however, to stand according to your representation, you must remember, Miss Bennet, that the friend, who is supposed to desire his return to the house, and the delay of his plan, has merely desired it, asked it without offering one argument in favour of its propriety."

"To yield readily — easily — to the *persuasion* of a friend is no merit with you."

"To yield without conviction is no compliment to the understanding of either."

"You appear to me, Mr. Darcy, to allow nothing for the influence of friendship and affection. A regard for the requester would often make one readily yield to a request, without waiting for arguments to reason one into it. I am not particularly speaking of such a case as you have supposed about Mr. Bingley. We may as well wait, perhaps, till the circumstance occurs before we discuss the discretion of his behaviour thereupon. But in general and ordinary cases between friend and friend, where one of them is desired by the other to change a resolution of no very great moment, should you think ill of that person for complying with the desire, without waiting to be argued into it?"

"Will it not be advisable, before we proceed on this subject, to arrange with rather more precision the degree of importance which is to appertain to this request, as well as the degree of intimacy subsisting between the parties?"

"By all means," cried Bingley; "let us hear all the particulars, not forgetting their comparative height and size; for that will have more weight in the argument, Miss Bennet, than you may be aware of. I assure you, that if Darcy were not such a great tall fellow, in comparison with myself, I should not pay him half so much deference. I declare I do not know a more awful object than Darcy, on particular occasions, and in particular places; at his own house especially, and of a Sunday evening, when he has nothing to do."

Mr. Darcy smiled; but Elizabeth thought she could perceive that he was rather offended, and therefore checked her laugh. Miss Bingley warmly resented the indignity he had received, in an expostulation with her brother for talking such nonsense.

"I see your design, Bingley," said his friend. "You dislike an argument, and want to silence this."

"Perhaps I do. Arguments are too much like disputes. If you and Miss Bennet will defer yours till I am out of the room, I shall be very thankful; and then you may say whatever you like of me."

"What you ask," said Elizabeth, "is no sacrifice on my side; and Mr. Darcy had much better finish his letter."

Mr. Darcy took her advice, and did finish his letter.

When that business was over, he applied to Miss Bingley and Elizabeth for the indulgence of some music. Miss Bingley moved with alacrity to the piano-forte; and, after a polite request that Elizabeth would lead the way, which the other as politely and more earnestly negatived, she seated herself.

Mrs. Hurst sang with her sister, and while they were thus employed, Elizabeth could not help observing, as she turned over some music-books that lay on the instrument, how frequently Mr. Darcy's eyes were fixed on her. She hardly knew how to suppose that she could be an object of admiration to so great a man; and yet that he should look at her because he disliked her, was still more strange. She could only imagine, however, at last that she drew his notice because there was something about her more wrong and reprehensible, according to his ideas of right, than in any other person present. The supposition did not pain her. She liked him too little to care for his approbation.

After playing some Italian songs, Miss Bingley varied the charm by a lively Scotch air; and soon afterwards Mr. Darcy, drawing near Elizabeth, said to her:

"Do not you feel a great inclination, Miss Bennet, to seize such an opportunity of dancing a reel?"

She smiled, but made no answer. He repeated the question, with some surprise at her silence.

"Oh!" said she, "I heard you before, but I could not immediately determine what to say in reply. You wanted me, I know, to say 'Yes,' that you might have the pleasure of despising my taste; but I always delight in overthrowing those kind of schemes, and cheating a person of their premeditated contempt. I have, therefore, made up my mind to tell you, that I do not want to dance a reel at all — and now despise me if you dare."

"Indeed I do not dare."

Elizabeth, having rather expected to affront him, was amazed at his gallantry; but there was a mixture of sweetness and archness in her manner which made it difficult for her to affront anybody; and Darcy had never been so bewitched by any woman as he was by her. He really believed, that were it not for the inferiority of her connections, he should be in some danger.

Miss Bingley saw, or suspected enough to be jealous; and her great anxiety for the recovery of her dear friend Jane received some assistance from her desire of getting rid of Elizabeth.

She often tried to provoke Darcy into disliking her guest, by talking of their supposed marriage, and planning his happiness in such an alliance.

"I hope," said she, as they were walking together in the shrubbery the next day, "you will give your mother-in-law a few hints, when this desirable event takes place, as to the advantage of holding her tongue; and if you can compass it, do cure the younger girls of running after the officers. And, if I may mention so delicate a subject, endeavour to check that little something, bordering on conceit and impertinence, which your lady possesses."

"Have you anything else to propose for my domestic felicity?"

"Oh! yes. Do let the portraits of your uncle and aunt Philips get placed in the gallery at Pemberley. Put them next to your great-uncle the judge. They are in the same profession, you know; only in different lines. As for your Elizabeth's picture, you must not attempt to have it taken, for what painter could do justice to those beautiful eyes?"

"It would not be easy, indeed, to catch their expression, but their colour and shape, and the eyelashes, so remarkably fine, might be copied."

At that moment they were met from another walk by Mrs. Hurst and Elizabeth herself.

"I did not know that you intended to walk," said Miss Bingley, in some confusion, lest they had been overheard.

"You used us abominably ill," answered Mrs. Hurst, "running away without telling us that you were coming out."

Then taking the disengaged arm of Mr. Darcy, she left Elizabeth to walk by herself. The path just admitted three. Mr. Darcy felt their rudeness, and immediately said:

"This walk is not wide enough for our party. We had better go into the avenue."

But Elizabeth, who had not the least inclination to remain with them, laughingly answered:

"No, no; stay where you are. You are charmingly grouped, and appear to uncommon advantage. The picturesque would be spoilt by admitting a fourth. Good-bye."

She then ran gaily off, rejoicing, as she rambled about, in the hope of being at home again in a day or two. Jane was already so much recovered as to intend leaving her room for a couple of hours that evening.

## CHAPTER XI

When the ladies removed after dinner, Elizabeth ran up to her sister, and seeing her well guarded from cold, attended her into the drawing-room, where she was welcomed by her two friends with many professions of pleasure; and Elizabeth had never seen them so agreeable as they were during the hour which passed before the gentlemen appeared. Their powers of conversation were considerable.



They could describe an entertainment with accuracy, relate an anecdote with humour, and laugh at their acquaintance with spirit.

But when the gentlemen entered, Jane was no longer the first object; Miss Bingley's eyes were instantly turned toward Darcy, and she had something to say to him before he had advanced many steps. He addressed himself to Miss Bennet, with a polite congratulation; Mr. Hurst also made her a slight bow, and said he was "very glad"; but diffuseness and warmth remained for Bingley's salutation. He was full of joy and attention. The first half-hour was spent in piling up the fire, lest she should suffer from the change of room; and she removed at his desire to the other side of the fireplace, that she might be farther from the door. He then sat down by her, and talked scarcely to anyone else. Elizabeth, at work in the opposite corner, saw it all with great delight.

When tea was over, Mr. Hurst reminded his sister-in-law of the card-table — but in vain. She had obtained private intelligence that Mr. Darcy did not wish for cards; and Mr. Hurst soon found even his open petition rejected. She assured him that no one intended to play, and the silence of the whole party on the subject seemed to justify her. Mr. Hurst had therefore nothing to do, but to stretch himself on one of the sofas and go to sleep. Darcy took up a book; Miss Bingley did the same; and Mrs. Hurst, principally occupied in playing with her bracelets and rings, joined now and then in her brother's conversation with Miss Bennet.

Miss Bingley's attention was quite as much engaged in watching Mr. Darcy's progress through *his* book, as in reading her own; and she was perpetually either making some inquiry, or looking at his page. She could not win him, however, to any conversation; he merely answered her question, and read on. At length, quite exhausted by the attempt to be amused with her own book, which she had only chosen because it was the second volume of his, she gave a great yawn and said, "How pleasant it is to spend an evening in this way! I declare after all there is no enjoyment like reading! How much sooner one tires of anything than of a book! When I have a house of my own, I shall be miserable if I have not an excellent library."

No one made any reply. She then yawned again, threw aside her book, and cast her eyes round the room in quest of some amusement; when hearing her brother mentioning a ball to Miss Bennet, she turned suddenly towards him and said:

"By the bye, Charles, are you really serious in meditating a dance at Netherfield? I would advise you, before you determine on it, to consult the wishes of the present party; I am much mistaken if there are not some among us to whom a ball would be rather a punishment than a pleasure."

"If you mean Darcy," cried her brother, "he may go to bed, if he chooses, before it begins — but as for the ball, it is quite a settled thing; and as soon as Nicholls has made white soup enough, I shall send round my cards."

"I should like balls infinitely better," she replied, "if they were carried on in a different manner; but there is something insufferably tedious in the usual process of such a meeting. It would surely be much more rational if conversation instead of dancing were made the order of the day."

"Much more rational, my dear Caroline, I dare say, but it would not be near so much like a ball."

Miss Bingley made no answer, and soon afterwards got up and walked about the room. Her figure was elegant, and she walked well; but Darcy, at whom it was all aimed, was still inflexibly studious. In the desperation of her feelings, she resolved on one effort more, and, turning to Elizabeth, said:

"Miss Eliza Bennet, let me persuade you to follow my example, and take a turn about the room. I assure you it is very refreshing after sitting so long in one attitude."

Elizabeth was surprised, but agreed to it immediately. Miss Bingley succeeded no less in the real object of her civility; Mr. Darcy looked up. He was as much awake to the novelty of attention in that quarter as Elizabeth herself could be, and unconsciously closed his book. He was directly invited to join their party, but he declined it, observing that he could imagine but two motives for their choosing to walk up and down the room together, with either of which motives his joining them would interfere. What could he mean? She was dying to know what could be his meaning — and asked Elizabeth whether she could at all understand him?

"Not at all," was her answer; "but depend upon it, he means to be severe on us, and our surest way of disappointing him will be to ask nothing about it."

Miss Bingley, however, was incapable of disappointing Mr. Darcy in anything, and persevered therefore in requiring an explanation of his two motives.

"I have not the smallest objection to explaining them," said he, as soon as she allowed him to speak. "You either choose this method of passing the evening because you are in each other's confidence, and have secret affairs to discuss, or because you are conscious that your figures appear to the greatest advantage in walking; if the first, I should be completely in your way, and if the second, I can admire you much better as I sit by the fire."

"Oh! shocking!" cried Miss Bingley. "I never heard anything so abominable. How shall we punish him for such a speech?"

"Nothing so easy, if you have but the inclination," said Elizabeth. "We can all plague and punish one another. Tease him — laugh at him. Intimate as you are, you must know how it is to be done."

"But upon my honour I do *not*. I do assure you that my intimacy has not yet taught me *that*. Tease calmness of temper and presence of mind! No, no — I feel he may defy us there. And as to laughter, we will not expose ourselves, if you please, by attempting to laugh without a subject. Mr. Darcy may hug himself."

"Mr. Darcy is not to be laughed at!" cried Elizabeth. "That is an uncommon advantage, and uncommon I hope it will continue, for it would be a great loss to *me* to have many such acquaintances. I dearly love a laugh."

"Miss Bingley," said he, "has given me credit for more than can be. The wisest and the best of men — nay, the wisest and best of their actions — may be rendered ridiculous by a person whose first object in life is a joke."

"Certainly," replied Elizabeth — "there are such people, but I hope I am not one of *them*. I hope I never ridicule what is wise or good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies, *do* divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can. But these, I suppose, are precisely what you are without."

"Perhaps that is not possible for anyone. But it has been the study of my life to avoid those weaknesses which often expose a strong understanding to ridicule."

"Such as vanity and pride."

"Yes, vanity is a weakness indeed. But pride — where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always under good regulation."

Elizabeth turned away to hide a smile.

"Your examination of Mr. Darcy is over, I presume," said Miss Bingley; "and pray what is the result?"

"I am perfectly convinced by it that Mr. Darcy has no defect. He owns it himself without disguise."

"No," said Darcy, "I have made no such pretension. I have faults enough, but they are not, I hope, of understanding. My temper I dare not vouch for. It is, I believe, too little yielding — certainly too little for the convenience of the world. I cannot forget the follies and vices of others so soon as I ought, nor their offences against myself. My feelings are not puffed about with every attempt to move them. My temper would perhaps be called resentful. My good opinion once lost, is lost for ever."

"*That* is a failing indeed!" cried Elizabeth. "Implacable resentment is a shade in a character. But you have chosen your fault well. I really cannot *laugh* at it. You are safe from me."

"There is, I believe, in every disposition a tendency to some particular evil — a natural defect, which not even the best education can overcome."

"And *your* defect is a propensity to hate everybody."

"And yours," he replied, with a smile, "is wilfully to misunderstand them."

"Do let us have a little music," cried Miss Bingley, tired of a conversation in which she had no share. "Louisa, you will not mind my waking Mr. Hurst?"

Her sister made not the smallest objection, and the pianoforte was opened; and Darcy, after a few moments' recollection, was not sorry for it. He began to feel the danger of paying Elizabeth too much attention.

## QUESTIONS

1. What are the names of the five Bennet sisters? Characterize Mr. and Mrs. Bennet.
2. What is Mr. Darcy's chief character trait? Give several illustrations of this trait.
3. List several of Miss Bingley's criticisms of Elizabeth. What is her motive in criticizing?
4. What is Jane's chief character trait? What fault did Mr. Darcy find with her?
5. What promise did Elizabeth make her mother concerning Mr. Darcy? Does she keep it?
6. Characterize Mary Bennet as distinguished from her sisters.
7. Identify Longbourn; Netherfield; Lucas Lodge.
8. Which character gives advice on courtship and marriage? What is her advice?
9. What was the first thing about Elizabeth which attracted Mr. Darcy? What else did he like about her?
10. What is the main conflict in this plot? What question is uppermost in the reader's mind at the end of the selection?

Emily Brontë

## Wuthering Heights

*Emily Brontë and her talented sisters Charlotte (author of Jane Eyre) and Anne grew up in an isolated rectory on the Yorkshire moors, Haworth Parsonage. They were educated by their stern father and, for a time, at a boarding school. Later Emily worked as a governess and studied languages in Brussels with Charlotte preparatory to opening a boarding school of their own; she died in 1848, aged thirty, before this project could be carried out. Wuthering Heights, her only novel, was published in 1847 as by "Ellis Bell" and attracted little attention then, but has since been recognized as one of the finest romantic novels in English literature. "A love story, perhaps the strangest that was ever written," it is "a book of fire and ice . . . raged through, as by a wind, by a damned soul — the fated, fatal Heathcliff."*

## CHAPTER ONE

1801 —

I have just returned from a visit to my landlord — the solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with. This is certainly a beautiful country! In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society. A perfect misanthropist's heaven: and Mr. Heathcliff and I are such a suitable pair to divide the desolation between us. A capital fellow!

He little imagined how my heart warmed towards him when I beheld his black eyes withdraw so suspiciously under their brows, as I rode up, and when his fingers sheltered themselves, with a jealous resolution, still further in his waistcoat, as I announced my name.

"Mr. Heathcliff!" I said.

A nod was the answer.

"Mr. Lockwood, your new tenant, sir. I do myself the honour of calling as soon as possible after my arrival, to express the hope that I have not inconvenienced you by my perseverance in soliciting the occupation of Thrushcross Grange: I heard yesterday you had had some thoughts" —

"Thrushcross Grange is my own, sir," he interrupted, wincing. "I should not allow any one to inconvenience me, if I could hinder it — walk in!"

The "walk in" was uttered with closed teeth, and expressed the sentiment, "Go to the deuce" — even the gate over which he leant manifested no sympathising movement to the words; and I think that circumstance determined me to accept the invitation: I felt interested in a man who seemed more exaggeratedly reserved than myself.

When he saw my horse's breast fairly pushing the barrier, he did put out his hand to unchain it, and then suddenly preceded me up the causeway, calling, as we entered the court — "Joseph, take Mr. Lockwood's horse; and bring up some wine."

"Here we have the whole establishment of domestics, I suppose," was the reflection suggested by this compound order. "No wonder the grass grows up between the flags, and cattle are the only hedge-cutters."

Joseph was an elderly, nay an old man: very old, perhaps, though hale and sinewy. "The Lord help us!" he soliloquised in an undertone of peevish displeasure, while relieving me of my horse: looking, meantime, in my face so sourly that I charitably conjectured he must have need of divine aid to digest his dinner, and his pious ejaculation had no reference to my unexpected advent.

Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr. Heathcliff's dwelling. "Wuthering" being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather. Pure, bracing ventilation they must have up there at all times, indeed; one may guess the power of the north wind blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few stunted firs at the end of the house; and by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun. Happily, the architect had foresight to build it strong: the narrow windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones.

Before passing the threshold, I paused to admire a quantity of grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door; above which, among a wilderness of crumbling griffins and shameless little boys, I detected the date "1500," and the name "Hareton Earnshaw." I would have

made a few comments, and requested a short history of the place from the surly owner; but his attitude at the door appeared to demand my speedy entrance, or complete departure, and I had no desire to aggravate his impatience previous to inspecting the penetralium.

One step brought us into the family sitting-room, without any introductory lobby or passage: they call it here "the house" pre-eminently. It includes kitchen and parlour, generally; but I believe at *Wuthering Heights* the kitchen is forced to retreat altogether into another quarter: at least I distinguished a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils, deep within; and I observed no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking, about the huge fire-place; nor any glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the walls. One end, indeed, reflected splendidly both light and heat from ranks of immense pewter dishes, interspersed with silver jugs and tankards, towering row after row, on a vast oak dresser, to the very roof. The latter had never been underdrawn: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye, except where a frame of wood laden with oatcakes and clusters of legs of beef, mutton, and ham, concealed it. Above the chimney were sundry villainous old guns, and a couple of horse-pistols: and, by way of ornament, three gaudily-painted canisters disposed along its ledge. The floor was of smooth white stone; the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade. In an arch under the dresser, reposed a huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer, surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies; and other dogs haunted other recesses.

The apartment and furniture would have been nothing extraordinary as belonging to a homely, northern farmer, with a stubborn countenance, and stalwart limbs set out to advantage in knee-breeches and gaiters. Such an individual seated in his arm-chair, his mug of ale frothing on the round table before him, is to be seen in any circuit of five or six miles among these hills, if you go at the right time after dinner. But Mr. Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gipsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman: that is, as much a gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss with his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome figure; and rather morose. Possibly, some people might suspect him of a degree of underbred pride; I have a sympathetic chord within that tells me it is nothing of the sort: I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling — to manifestations of mutual kindness. He'll love and hate equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again. No, I'm running on too fast: I bestow my own attributes over liberally on him. Mr. Heathcliff may have entirely dissimilar reasons for keeping his hand out of the way when he meets a would-be acquaintance, to those which actuate me. Let me hope my constitution is almost peculiar: my dear mother used to say I should never have a comfortable home; and only last summer I proved myself perfectly unworthy of one.

While enjoying a month of fine weather at the sea-coast, I was thrown into the company of a most fascinating creature: a real goddess in my eyes, as long as she took no notice of me. I "never told my love" vocally; still, if looks have language, the merest idiot might have guessed I was over head and ears: she understood me at last, and looked a return — the sweetest of all imaginable looks. And what did I do? I confess it with shame — shrunk icily into myself, like a snail; at every glance retired colder and farther; till finally the poor innocent was led to doubt her own senses, and, overwhelmed with confusion at her supposed mistake, persuaded her mamma to decamp. By this curious turn of disposition I have gained the reputation of deliberate heartlessness; how undeserved, I alone can appreciate.

I took a seat at the end of the hearthstone opposite that towards which my landlord advanced, and filled up an interval of silence by attempting to caress the canine mother, who had left her nursery, and was sneaking wolfishly to the back of my legs, her lip curled up, and her white teeth watering for a snatch. My caress provoked a long, guttural snarl.

"You'd better let the dog alone," growled Mr. Heathcliff in unison, checking fiercer demonstrations with a punch of his foot. "She's not accustomed to be spoiled — not kept for a pet." Then, striding to a side door, he shouted again, "Joseph!"

Joseph mumbled indistinctly in the depths of the cellar, but gave no intimation of ascending; so his master dived down to him, leaving me *vis-à-vis* the ruffianly bitch and a pair of grim shaggy sheep-dogs, who shared with her a jealous guardianship over all my movements. Not anxious to come in contact with their fangs, I sat still; but, imagining they would scarcely understand tacit insults, I unfortunately indulged in winking and making faces at the trio, and some turn of my physiognomy so irritated madam, that she suddenly broke into a fury and leapt on my knees. I flung her back, and hastened to interpose the table between us. This proceeding roused the whole hive: half-a-dozen four-footed fiends, of various sizes and ages, issued from hidden dens to the common centre. I felt my heels and coat-laps peculiar subjects of assault; and parrying off the larger combatants as effectually as I could with the poker, I was constrained to demand, aloud, assistance from some of the household in re-establishing peace.

Mr. Heathcliff and his man climbed the cellar steps with vexatious phlegm: I don't think they moved one second faster than usual, though the hearth was an absolute tempest of worrying and yelping. Happily, an inhabitant of the kitchen made more despatch: a lusty dame, with tucked-up gown, bare arms, and fire-flushed cheeks, rushed into the midst of us flourishing a frying-pan: and used that weapon, and her tongue, to such purpose, that the storm subsided magically, and she only remained, heaving like a sea after a high wind, when her master entered on the scene.

"What the devil is the matter?" he asked, eyeing me in a manner that I could ill endure after this inhospitable treatment.

"What the devil, indeed!" I muttered. "The herd of possessed swine could have had no worse spirits in them than those animals of yours, sir. You might as well leave a stranger with a brood of tigers!"

"They won't meddle with persons who touch nothing," he remarked, putting the bottle before me, and restoring the displaced table. "The dogs do right to be vigilant. Take a glass of wine?"

"No, thank you."

"Not bitten, are you?"

"If I had been, I would have set my signet on the biter." Heathcliff's countenance relaxed into a grin.

"Come, come," he said, "you are flurried, Mr. Lockwood. Here, take a little wine. Guests are so exceedingly rare in this house that I and my dogs, I am willing to own, hardly know how to receive them. Your health, sir!"

I bowed and returned the pledge; beginning to perceive that it would be foolish to sit sulking for the misbehaviour of a pack of curs: besides, I felt loath to yield the fellow further amusement at my expense; since the humour took that turn. He — probably swayed by prudential consideration of the folly of offending a good tenant — relaxed a little in the laconic style of chipping off his pronouns and auxiliary verbs, and introduced what he supposed would be a subject of interest to me, — a discourse on the advantages and disadvantages of my present place of retirement. I found him very intelligent on the topics we touched; and before I went home, I was encouraged so far as to volunteer another visit to-morrow. He evidently wished no repetition of my intrusion. I shall go, notwithstanding. It is astonishing how sociable I feel myself compared with him.

## CHAPTER TWO

Yesterday afternoon set in misty and cold. I had half a mind to spend it by my study fire, instead of wading through heath and mud to *Wuthering Heights*. On coming up from dinner however (N.B. — I dine between twelve and one o'clock; the housekeeper, a matronly lady, taken as a fixture along with the house, could not, or would not, comprehend my request that I might be served at five), on mounting the stairs with this lazy intention, and stepping into the room, I saw a servant-girl on her knees surrounded by brushes and coal-scuttles, and raising an infernal dust as she extinguished the flames with heaps of cinders. This spectacle drove me back immediately; I took my hat, and, after a four miles' walk arrived at Heathcliff's garden gate just in time to escape the first feathery flakes of a snow-shower.

On that bleak hill-top the earth was hard with a black frost, and the air made me shiver through every limb. Being unable to remove the chain, I jumped



over, and, running up the flagged causeway bordered with straggling gooseberry bushes, knocked vainly for admittance, till my knuckles tingled and the dogs howled.

"Wretched inmates!" I ejaculated mentally, "you deserve perpetual isolation from your species for your churlish inhospitality. At least, I would not keep my door barred in the day-time. I don't care — I will get in!" So resolved, I grasped the latch and shook it vehemently. Vinegar-faced Joseph projected his head from a round window of the barn.

"What are ye for?" he shouted. "'T' maister's down i' t' fowld. Go round by th' end ot' laith, if ye went to spake to him."

"Is there nobody inside to open the door?" I hallooed, responsively.

"There's nobbut t' missis; and shoo'll not oppen't an ye mak yer flaysome dins till neeght."

"Why? Cannot you tell her who I am, eh, Joseph?"

"Nor-ne me! I'll hae no hend wi't," muttered the head, vanishing.

The snow began to drive thickly: I seized the handle to essay another trial; when a young man without coat, and shouldering a pitchfork, appeared in the yard behind. He hailed me to follow him, and, after marching through a wash-house, and a paved area containing a coal-shed, pump, and pigeon-cot, we at length arrived in the huge, warm cheerful apartment, where I was formerly received. It glowed delightfully in the radiance of an immense fire, compounded of coal, peat, and wood; and near the table, laid for a plentiful evening meal, I was pleased to observe the "missis," an individual whose existence I had never previously suspected. I bowed and waited, thinking she would bid me take a seat. She looked at me, leaning back in her chair, and remained motionless and mute.

"Rough weather!" I remarked. "I'm afraid, Mrs. Heathcliff, the door must bear the consequence of your servants' leisure attendance: I had hard work to make them hear me."

She never opened her mouth. I stared — she stared also: at any rate, she kept her eyes on me in a cool, regardless manner, exceedingly embarrassing and disagreeable.

"Sit down," said the young man gruffly. "He'll be in soon."

I obeyed; and hemmed, and called the villain Juno, who deigned, at this second interview, to move the extreme tip of her tail, in token of owning my acquaintance.

"A beautiful animal!" I commented again. "Do you intend parting with the little ones, madam?"

"They are not mine," said the amiable hostess, more repellingly than Heathcliff himself could have replied.

"Ah, your favourites are among these?" I continued, turning to an obscure cushion full of something like cats.

"A strange choice of favourites!" she observed scornfully.

Unluckily, it was a heap of dead rabbits. I hemmed once more, and drew closer to the hearth, repeating my comment on the wildness of the evening.

"You should not have come out," she said, rising and reaching from the chimney-piece two of the painted canisters.

Her position before was sheltered from the light; now, I had a distinct view of her whole figure and countenance. She was slender, and apparently scarcely past girlhood: an admirable form, and the most exquisite little face that I have ever had the pleasure of beholding; small features, very fair; flaxen ringlets, or rather golden, hanging loose on her delicate neck; and eyes, had they been agreeable in expression, that would have been irresistible: fortunately for my susceptible heart, the only sentiment they evinced hovered between scorn, and a kind of desperation, singularly unnatural to be detected there. The canisters were almost out of her reach; I made a motion to aid her; she turned upon me as a miser might turn if anyone attempted to assist him in counting his gold.

"I don't want your help," she snapped; "I can get them for myself."

"I beg your pardon!" I hastened to reply.

"Were you asked to tea?" she demanded, tying an apron over her neat black frock, and standing with a spoonful of the leaf poised over the pot.

"I shall be glad to have a cup," I answered.

"Were you asked?" she repeated.

"No," I said, half smiling. "You are the proper person to ask me."

She flung the tea back, spoon and all, and resumed her chair in a pet; her forehead corrugated, and her red underlip pushed out, like a child's ready to cry.

Meanwhile, the young man had slung on to his person a decidedly shabby upper garment, and, erecting himself before the blaze, looked down on me from the corner of his eyes, for all the world as if there were some mortal feud unavenged between us. I began to doubt whether he were a servant or not: his dress and speech were both rude, entirely devoid of the superiority observable in Mr. and Mrs. Heathcliff; his thick, brown curls were rough and uncultivated, his whiskers encroached bearishly over his cheeks, and his hands were embrowned like those of a common labourer; still his bearing was free, almost haughty, and he showed none of a domestic's assiduity in attending on the lady of the house. In the absence of clear proofs of his condition, I deemed it best to abstain from noticing his curious conduct; and, five minutes afterwards, the entrance of Heathcliff relieved me, in some measure, from my uncomfortable state.

"You see, sir, I am come, according to promise!" I exclaimed, assuming the cheerful; "and I fear I shall be weather-bound for half an hour, if you can afford me shelter during that space."

"Half-an-hour?" he said, shaking the white flakes from his clothes; "I wonder you should select the thick of a snowstorm to ramble about in. Do you

know that you run a risk of being lost in the marshes? People familiar with these moors often miss their road on such evenings; and I can tell you there is no chance of a change at present."

"Perhaps I can get a guide among your lads, and he might stay at the Grange till morning — could you spare me one?"

"No, I could not."

"Oh, indeed! Well, then, I must trust to my own sagacity."

"Umph!"

"Are you going to make th' tea?" demanded he of the shabby coat, shifting his ferocious gaze from me to the young lady.

"Is *he* to have any?" she asked, appealing to Heathcliff.

"Get it ready, will you?" was the answer, uttered so savagely that I started. The tone in which the words were said revealed a genuine bad nature. I no longer felt inclined to call Heathcliff a capital fellow. When the preparations were finished, he invited me with — "Now, sir, bring forward your chair." And we all, including the rustic youth, drew round the table: an austere silence prevailing while we discussed our meal.

I thought, if I had caused the cloud, it was my duty to make an effort to dispel it. They could not every day sit so grim and taciturn; and it was impossible, however ill-tempered they might be, that the universal scowl they wore was their every-day countenance.

"It is strange," I began, in the interval of swallowing one cup of tea and receiving another — "it is strange how custom can mould our tastes and ideas: many could not imagine the existence of happiness in a life of such complete exile from the world as you spend, Mr. Heathcliff; yet I'll venture to say, that, surrounded by your family, and with your amiable lady as the presiding genius over your home and heart" —

"My amiable lady!" he interrupted, with an almost diabolical sneer on his face. "Where is she — my amiable lady?"

"Mrs. Heathcliff, your wife, I mean."

"Well, yes — Oh, you would intimate that her spirit has taken the post of ministering angel, and guards the fortunes of Wuthering Heights even when her body is gone. Is that it?"

Perceiving myself in a blunder, I attempted to correct it. I might have seen there was too great a disparity between the ages of the parties to make it likely that they were man and wife. One was about forty: a period of mental vigour at which men seldom cherish the delusion of being married for love by girls: that dream is reserved for the solace of our declining years. The other did not look seventeen.

Then it flashed upon me — "The clown at my elbow, who is drinking his tea out of a basin and eating his bread with unwashed hands, may be her husband: Heathcliff, junior, of course. Here is the consequence of being buried

alive: she has thrown herself away upon that boor from sheer ignorance that better individuals existed! A sad pity — I must beware how I cause her to regret her choice.” The last reflection may seem conceited; it was not. My neighbour struck me as bordering on repulsive; I knew, through experience, that I was tolerably attractive.

“Mrs. Heathcliff is my daughter-in-law,” said Heathcliff, corroborating my surmise. He turned, as he spoke, a peculiar look in her direction: a look of hatred; unless he has a most perverse set of facial muscles that will not, like those of other people, interpret the language of his soul.

“Ah, certainly — I see now: you are the favoured possessor of the beneficent fairy,” I remarked, turning to my neighbour.

This was worse than before: the youth grew crimson, and clenched his fist, with every appearance of a meditated assault. But he seemed to recollect himself presently, and smothered the storm in a brutal curse, muttered on my behalf: which, however, I took care not to notice.

“Unhappy in your conjectures, sir,” observed my host; “we neither of us have the privilege of owning your good fairy; her mate is dead. I said she was my daughter-in-law, therefore, she must have married my son.”

“And this young man is” —

“Not my son, assuredly.”

Heathcliff smiled again, as if it were rather too bold a jest to attribute the paternity of that bear to him.

“My name is Hareton Earnshaw,” growled the other; “and I’d counsel you to respect it!”

“I’ve shown no disrespect,” was my reply, laughing internally at the dignity with which he announced himself.

He fixed his eye on me longer than I cared to return the stare, for fear I might be tempted either to box his ears or render my hilarity audible. I began to feel unmistakably out of place in that pleasant family circle. The dismal spiritual atmosphere overcame, and more than neutralised, the glowing physical comforts round me; and I resolved to be cautious how I ventured under those rafters a third time.

The business of eating being concluded, and no one uttering a word of sociable conversation, I approached a window to examine the weather. A sorrowful sight I saw: dark night coming down prematurely, and sky and hills mingled in one bitter whirl of wind and suffocating snow.

“I don’t think it possible for me to get home now without a guide,” I could not help exclaiming. “The roads will be buried already; and, if they were bare, I could scarcely distinguish a foot in advance.”

“Hareton, drive those dozen sheep into the barn porch. They’ll be covered if left in the fold all night: and put a plank before them,” said Heathcliff.

“How must I do?” I continued, with rising irritation,

There was no reply to my question; and on looking round I saw only Joseph bringing in a pail of porridge for the dogs, and Mrs. Heathcliff leaning over the fire, diverting herself with burning a bundle of matches which had fallen from the chimney-piece as she restored the tea canister to its place. The former, when he had deposited his burden, took a critical survey of the room, and in cracked tones, grated out:

"Aw wonder how yah can faishion to stand thear i' idleness un war, when all on 'em's goan out! Bud yah're a nowt, and it's no use talking — yah'll niver mend o' yer ill ways, but goa raight to t' devil, like yer mother afore ye!"

I imagined, for a moment, that this piece of eloquence was addressed to me; and, sufficiently enraged, stepped towards the aged rascal with an intention of kicking him out of the door. Mrs. Heathcliff, however, checked me by her answer.

"You scandalous old hypocrite!" she replied. "Are you not afraid of being carried away bodily, whenever you mention the devil's name? I warn you to refrain from provoking me, or I'll ask your abduction as a special favour. Stop! look here, Joseph," she continued, taking a long, dark book from a shelf; "I'll show you how far I've progressed in the Black Art: I shall soon be competent to make a clear house of it. The red cow didn't die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!"

"Oh, wicked, wicked!" gasped the elder; "may the Lord deliver us from evil!"

"No, reprobate! you are a castaway — be off, or I'll hurt you seriously! I'll have you all modelled in wax and clay; and the first who passes the limits I fix, shall — I'll not say what he shall be done to — but, you'll see! Go, I'm looking at you!"

The little witch put a mock malignity into her beautiful eyes, and Joseph, trembling with sincere horror, hurried out praying and ejaculating "wicked" as he went. I thought her conduct must be prompted by a species of dreary fun; and, now that we were alone, I endeavoured to interest her in my distress.

"Mrs. Heathcliff," I said earnestly, "you must excuse me for troubling you. I presume, because, with that face, I'm sure you cannot help being good-hearted. Do point out some landmarks by which I may know my way home: I have no more idea how to get there than you would have how to get to London!"

"Take the road you came," she answered, ensconcing herself in a chair, with a candle, and the long book open before her. "It is brief advice, but as sound as I can give."

"Then, if you hear of me being discovered dead in a bog or a pit full of snow, your conscience won't whisper that it is partly your fault?"

"How so? I cannot escort you. They wouldn't let me go to the end of the garden-wall."

"*You!* I should be sorry to ask you to cross the threshold, for my conven-

ience, on such a night," I cried. "I want you to *tell* me my way, not to *show* it; or else to persuade Mr. Heathcliff to give me a guide."

"Who? There is himself, Earnshaw, Zillah, Joseph and I. Which would you have?"

"Are there no boys at the farm?"

"No; those are all."

"Then, it follows that I am compelled to stay."

"That you may settle with your host. I have nothing to do with it."

"I hope it will be a lesson to you to make no more rash journeys on these hills," cried Heathcliff's stern voice from the kitchen entrance. "As to staying here, I don't keep accommodations for visitors: you must share a bed with Hareton or Joseph, if you do."

"I can sleep on a chair in this room," I replied.

"No, no! A stranger is a stranger, be he rich or poor; it will not suit me to permit any one the range of the place while I am off guard!" said the unmannerly wretch.

With this insult, my patience was at an end. I uttered an expression of disgust, and pushed past him into the yard, running against Earnshaw in my haste. It was so dark that I could not see the means of exit; and, as I wandered round, I heard another specimen of their civil behaviour amongst each other. At first the young man appeared about to befriend me.

"I'll go with him as far as the park," he said.

"You'll go with him to hell!" exclaimed his master, or whatever relation he bore. "And who is to look after the horses, eh?"

"A man's life is of more consequence than one evening's neglect of the horses: somebody must go," murmured Mrs. Heathcliff, more kindly than I expected.

"Not at your command!" retorted Hareton. "If you set store on him, you'd better be quiet."

"Then I hope his ghost will haunt you; and I hope Mr. Heathcliff will never get another tenant till the Grange is a ruin!" she answered sharply.

"Hearken, hearken, shoo's cursing on 'em!" muttered Joseph, towards whom I had been steering.

He sat within earshot, milking the cows by the light of a lantern, which I seized unceremoniously, and, calling out that I would send it back on the morrow, rushed to the nearest postern.

"Maister, maister, he's staling t' lantern!" shouted the ancient, pursuing my retreat. "Hey, Gnasher! Hey, dog! Hey, Wolf, holld him, holld him!"

On opening the little door, two hairy monsters flew at my throat, bearing me down and extinguishing the light; while a mingled guffaw from Heathcliff and Hareton, put the copestone on my rage and humiliation. Fortunately, the beasts seemed more bent on stretching their paws and yawning and flourishing

their tails, than devouring me alive; but they would suffer no resurrection, and I was forced to lie till their malignant masters pleased to deliver me: then, hatless and trembling with wrath, I ordered the miscreants to let me out — on their peril to keep me one minute longer — with several incoherent threats of retaliation that, in their indefinite depth of virulency, smacked of King Lear.

The vehemence of my agitation brought on a copious bleeding at the nose, and still Heathcliff laughed, and still I scolded. I don't know what would have concluded the scene, had there not been one person at hand rather more rational than myself, and more benevolent than my entertainer. This was Zillah, the stout housewife; who at length issued forth to inquire into the nature of the uproar. She thought that some of them had been laying violent hands on me; and, not daring to attack her master, she turned her vocal artillery against the younger scoundrel.

"Well, Mr. Earnshaw," she cried, "I wonder what you'll have agait next! Are we going to murder folk on our very doorstones? I see this house will never do for me — look at t' poor lad, he's fair choking! Wisht, wisht! you mun'n't go on so. Come in, and I'll cure that: there now, hold ye still."

With these words she suddenly splashed a pint of icy water down my neck, and pulled me into the kitchen. Mr. Heathcliff followed, his accidental merriment expiring quickly in his habitual moroseness.

I was sick exceedingly, and dizzy and faint; and thus compelled perforce to accept lodgings under his roof. He told Zillah to give me a glass of brandy, and then passed on to the inner room; while she consoled with me on my sorry predicament, and having obeyed his orders, whereby I was somewhat revived, ushered me to bed.

### CHAPTER THREE

While leading the way upstairs, she recommended that I should hide the candle, and not make a noise; for her master had an odd notion about the chamber she would put me in, and never let anybody lodge there willingly. I asked the reason. She did not know, she answered: she had only lived there a year or two; and they had so many queer goings on, she could not begin to be curious.

Too stupefied to be curious myself, I fastened the door and glanced round for the bed. The whole furniture consisted of a chair, a clothes-press, and a large oak case, with squares cut out near the top resembling coach windows. Having approached this structure I looked inside, and perceived it to be a singular sort of old-fashioned couch, very conveniently designed to obviate the necessity for every member of the family having a room to himself. In fact, it formed a little closet, and the ledge of a window, which it enclosed, served as a table. I slid back the panelled sides, got in with my light, pulled them together again, and felt secure against the vigilance of Heathcliff, and every one else.

The ledge, where I placed my candle, had a few mildewed books piled up

in one corner; and it was covered with writing scratched on the paint. This writing, however, was nothing but a name repeated in all kinds of characters, large and small — *Catherine Earnshaw*, here and there varied to *Catherine Heathcliff*, and then again to *Catherine Linton*.

In vapid listlessness I leant my head against the window, and continued spelling over *Catherine Earnshaw* — *Heathcliff* — *Linton*, till my eyes closed; but they had not rested five minutes when a glare of white letters started from the dark as vivid as spectres — the air swarmed with *Catherines*; and rousing myself to dispel the obtrusive name, I discovered my candle wick reclining on one of the antique volumes, and perfuming the place with an odour of roasted calf-skin. I snuffed it out, and, very ill at ease under the influence of cold and lingering nausea, sat up and spread open the injured tome on my knee. It was a Testament, in lean type, and smelling dreadfully musty: a fly-leaf bore the inscription — “*Catherine Earnshaw, her book,*” and a date some quarter of a century back. I shut it, and took up another, and another, till I had examined all. *Catherine’s* library was select, and its state of dilapidation proved it to have been well used; though not altogether for a legitimate purpose: scarcely one chapter had escaped a pen-and-ink commentary — at least, the appearance of one — covering every morsel of blank that the printer had left. Some were detached sentences; other parts took the form of a regular diary, scrawled in an unformed childish hand. At the top of an extra page (quite a treasure, probably, when first lighted on) I was greatly amused to behold an excellent caricature of my friend Joseph, — rudely, yet powerfully sketched. An immediate interest kindled within me for the unknown *Catherine*, and I began forthwith to decipher her faded hieroglyphics.

“An awful Sunday!” commenced the paragraph beneath. “I wish my father were back again. Hindley is a detestable substitute — his conduct to *Heathcliff* is atrocious — H. and I are going to rebel — we took our initiatory step this evening.

“All day had been flooding with rain; we could not go to church, so Joseph must needs get up a congregation in the garret; and, while Hindley and his wife basked downstairs before a comfortable fire — doing anything but reading their Bibles, I’ll answer for it — *Heathcliff*, myself, and the unhappy plough-boy, were commanded to take our Prayer-books, and mount: were ranged in a row, on a sack of corn, groaning and shivering, and hoping that Joseph would shiver too, so that he might give us a short homily for his own sake. A vain idea! The service lasted precisely three hours; and yet my brother had the face to exclaim, when he saw us descending, ‘What, done already?’ On Sunday evenings we used to be permitted to play, if we did not make much noise; now a mere titter is sufficient to send us into corners!

“‘You forget you have a master here,’ says the tyrant. ‘I’ll demolish the first who puts me out of temper! I insist on perfect sobriety and silence. Oh, boy!



was that you? Frances, darling, pull his hair as you go by: I heard him snap his fingers.' Frances pulled his hair heartily, and then went and seated herself on her husband's knee; and there they were, like two babies, kissing and talking nonsense by the hour — foolish palaver that we should be ashamed of. We made ourselves as snug as our means allowed in the arch of the dresser. I had just fastened our pinafores together, and hung them up for a curtain, when in comes Joseph on an errand from the stables. He tears down my handiwork, boxes my ears and croaks —

"'T' maister nobbut just buried, and Sabbath no o'ered, und t' sound o' t' gospel still i' yer lugs, and ye darr be laiking! Shame on ye! sit ye down, ill childer! there's good books enough if ye'll read 'em! sit ye down, and think of yer sows!"

"Saying this, he compelled us so to square our positions that we might receive from the far-off fire a dull ray to show us the text of the lumber he thrust upon us. I could not bear the employment. I took my dinky volume by the scroop, and hurled it into the dog-kennel, vowing I hated a good book. Heathcliff kicked his to the same place. Then there was a hubbub!

"'Maister Hindley!" shouted our chaplain. 'Maister, coom hither! Miss Cathy's riven th' back off "'Th' Helmet o' Salvation," un' Heathcliff's pawsed his fit into t' first part o' "'T' Brooad Way to Destruction!" It's fair flaysome that ye let 'em go on this gait. Ech! th' owd man wad ha' laced 'em properly — but he's goan!"

"Hindley hurried up from his paradise on the hearth, and seizing one of us by the collar, and the other by the arm, hurled both into the back kitchen; where, Joseph asseverated, 'owd Nick' would fetch us as sure as we were living: and, so comforted, we each sought a separate nook to await his advent. I reached this book, and a pot of ink from a shelf, and pushed the house-door ajar to give me light, and I have got the time on with writing for twenty minutes; but my companion is impatient, and proposes that we should appropriate the dairy-woman's cloak, and have a scamper on the moors, under its shelter. A pleasant suggestion — and then, if the surly old man come in, he may believe his prophecy verified — we cannot be damper, or colder, in the rain than we are here."

. . . . .

I suppose Catherine fulfilled her project, for the next sentence took up another subject; she waxed lachrymose.

"How little did I dream that Hindley would ever make me cry so!" she wrote. "My head aches, till I cannot keep it on the pillow; and still I can't give over. Poor Heathcliff! Hindley calls him a vagabond, and won't let him sit with us, nor eat with us any more; and, he says, he and I must not play together, and threatens to turn him out of the house if we break his orders. He has been

blaming our father (how dared he?) for treating H. too liberally; and he swears he will reduce him to his right place" —

I began to nod drowsily over the dim page: my eye wandered from manuscript to print. I saw a red ornamented title — "Seventy Times Seven, and the First of the Seventy-First. A Pious Discourse delivered by the Reverend Jabes Branderham, in the Chapel of Gimmerdon Sough." And while I was, half consciously, worrying my brain to guess what Jabes Branderham would make of his subject, I sank back in bed, and fell asleep. Alas, for the effects of bad tea and bad temper! what else could it be that made me pass such a terrible night? I don't remember another that I can at all compare with it since I was capable of suffering.

I began to dream, almost before I ceased to be sensible of my locality. I thought it was morning; and I had set out on my way home, with Joseph for a guide. The snow lay yards deep in our road; and, as we floundered on, my companion wearied me with constant reproaches that I had not brought a pilgrim's staff: telling me that I could never get into the house without one, and boastfully flourishing a heavy-headed cudgel, which I understood to be so denominated. For a moment I considered it absurd that I should need such a weapon to gain admittance into my own residence. Then a new idea flashed across me. I was not going there: we were journeying to hear the famous Jabes Branderham preach from the text — "Seventy Times Seven"; and either Joseph, the preacher, or I had committed the "First of the Seventy-First," and were to be publicly exposed and excommunicated.

We came to the chapel. I have passed it really in my walks, twice or thrice; it lies in a hollow, between two hills: an elevated hollow, near a swamp, whose peaty moisture is said to answer all the purposes of embalming on the few corpses deposited there. The roof has been kept whole hitherto; but as the clergyman's stipend is only twenty pounds per annum, and a house with two rooms, threatening speedily to determine into one, no clergyman will undertake the duties of pastor: especially as it is currently reported that his flock would rather let him starve than increase the living by one penny from their own pockets. However, in my dream, Jabes had a full and attentive congregation; and he preached — good God! what a sermon: divided into *four hundred and ninety* parts, each fully equal to an ordinary address from the pulpit, and each discussing a separate sin! Where he searched for them, I cannot tell. He had his private manner of interpreting the phrase, and it seemed necessary the brother should sin different sins on every occasion. They were of the most curious character: odd transgressions that I never imagined previously.

Oh, how weary I grew. How I writhed, and yawned, and nodded, and revived! How I pinched and pricked myself, and rubbed my eyes, and stood up,

and sat down again, and nudged Joseph to inform me if he would *ever* have done. I was condemned to hear all out: finally, he reached the "*First of the Seventy-First*." At that crisis, a sudden inspiration descended on me; I was moved to rise and denounce Jabes Branderham as the sinner of the sin that no Christian need pardon.

"Sir," I exclaimed, "sitting here within these four walls, at one stretch, I have endured and forgiven the four hundred and ninety heads of your discourse. Seventy times seven times have I plucked up my hat and been about to depart — Seventy times seven times have you preposterously forced me to resume my seat. The four hundred and ninety-first is too much. Fellow-martyrs, have at him! Drag him down, and crush him to atoms, that the place which knows him may know him no more!"

"*Thou art the man!*" cried Jabes, after a solemn pause, leaning over his cushion. "Seventy times seven times didst thou gapingly contort thy visage — seventy times seven did I take counsel with my soul — Lo, this is human weakness: this also may be absolved! The First of the Seventy-First is come. Brethren, execute upon him the judgment written. Such honour have all His saints!"

With that concluding word, the whole assembly, exalting their pilgrim's staves, rushed round me in a body; and I, having no weapon to raise in self-defence, commenced grappling with Joseph, my nearest and most ferocious assailant, for his. In the confluence of the multitude, several clubs crossed; blows, aimed at me, fell on other sconces. Presently the whole chapel resounded with rappings and counter-rappings: every man's hand was against his neighbour; and Branderham, unwilling to remain idle, poured forth his zeal in a shower of loud taps on the boards of the pulpit, which responded so smartly that, at last, to my unspeakable relief, they woke me. And what was it that had suggested the tremendous tumult? What had played Jabes's part in the row? Merely, the branch of a fir-tree that touched my lattice, as the blast wailed by, and rattled its dry cones against the panes! I listened doubtingly an instant; detected the disturber, then turned and dozed, and dreamt again: if possible, still more disagreeably than before.

This time, I remembered I was lying in the oak closet, and I heard distinctly the gusty wind, and the driving of the snow; I heard, also, the fir-bough repeat its teasing sound, and ascribed it to the right cause: but it annoyed me so much, that I resolved to silence it, if possible; and, I thought, I rose and endeavoured to unhasp the casement. The hook was soldered into the staple: a circumstance observed by me when awake, but forgotten. "I must stop it, nevertheless!" I muttered, knocking my knuckles through the glass, and stretching an arm out to seize the importunate branch; instead of which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice-cold hand! The intense horror of nightmare came over me: I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed, "Let me in — let me in!" "Who are you?" I asked, struggling,

meanwhile, to disengage myself. "Catherine Linton," it replied, shiveringly (why did I think of *Linton*? I had read *Earnshaw* twenty times for Linton); "I'm come home: I'd lost my way on the moor!" As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child's face looking through the window. Terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on to the broken pane, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bedclothes: still it wailed, "Let me in!" and maintained its tenacious gripe, almost maddening me with fear. "How can I?" I said at length. "Let *me* go, if you want me to let you in!" The fingers relaxed, I snatched mine through the hole, hurriedly piled the books up in a pyramid against it, and stopped my ears to exclude the lamentable prayer. I seemed to keep them closed above a quarter of an hour; yet, the instant I listened again, there was the doleful cry moaning on! "Begone!" I shouted, "I'll never let you in, not if you beg for twenty years." "It is twenty years," mourned the voice: "twenty years. I've been a waif for twenty years!" Thereat began a feeble scratching outside, and the pile of books moved as if thrust forward. I tried to jump up; but could not stir a limb; and so yelled aloud, in a frenzy of fright. To my confusion, I discovered the yell was not ideal: hasty footsteps approached my chamber door; somebody pushed it open, with a vigorous hand, and a light glimmered through the squares at the top of the bed. I sat shuddering yet, and wiping the perspiration from my forehead: the intruder appeared to hesitate, and muttered to himself. At last, he said in a half-whisper, plainly not expecting an answer, "Is anyone here?" I considered it best to confess my presence; for I knew Heathcliff's accents, and feared he might search further, if I kept quiet. With this intention, I turned and opened the panels. I shall not soon forget the effect my action produced.

Heathcliff stood near the entrance, in his shirt and trousers: with a candle dripping over his fingers, and his face as white as the wall behind him. The first creak of the oak startled him like an electric shock! the light leaped from his hold to a distance of some feet, and his agitation was so extreme, that he could hardly pick it up.

"It is only your guest, sir," I called out, desirous to spare him the humiliation of exposing his cowardice further. "I had the misfortune to scream in my sleep, owing to a frightful nightmare. I'm sorry I disturbed you."

"Oh, God confound you, Mr. Lockwood! I wish you were at the —" commenced my host, setting the candle on a chair, because he found it impossible to hold it steady. "And who showed you up into this room?" he continued, crushing his nails into his palms, and grinding his teeth to subdue the maxillary convulsions. "Who was it? I've a good mind to turn them out of the house this moment!"

"It was your servant, Zillah," I replied, flinging myself on to the floor, and rapidly resuming my garments. "I should not care if you did, Mr. Heathcliff; she richly deserves it. I suppose that she wanted to get another proof that the

place was haunted, at my expense. Well, it is — swarming with ghosts and goblins! You have reason in shutting it up, I assure you. No one will thank you for a doze in such a den!”

“What do you mean?” asked Heathcliff, “and what are you doing? Lie down and finish out the night, since you *are* here; but, for Heaven’s sake! don’t repeat that horrid noise; nothing could excuse it, unless you were having your throat cut!”

“If the little fiend had got in at the window, she probably would have strangled me!” I returned. “I’m not going to endure the persecutions of your hospitable ancestors again. Was not the Reverend Jabes Branderham akin to you on the mother’s side? And that minx Catherine Linton, or Earnshaw, or however she was called — she must have been a changeling — wicked little soul! She told me she had been walking the earth these twenty years: a just punishment for her mortal transgressions, I’ve no doubt!”

Scarcely were these words uttered, when I recollected the association of Heathcliff’s with Catherine’s name in the book, which had completely slipped from my memory, till thus awakened. I blushed at my inconsideration; but, without showing further consciousness of the offence, I hastened to add — “The truth is, sir, I passed the first part of the night in” — Here I stopped afresh — I was about to say “perusing those old volumes,” then it would have revealed my knowledge of their written, as well as their printed contents: so, correcting myself, I went on, “in spelling over the name scratched on that window-ledge. A monotonous occupation, calculated to set me asleep, like counting, or” —

“What *can* you mean by talking in this way to *me*?” thundered Heathcliff with savage vehemence. “How — how *dare* you, under my roof? — God! he’s mad to speak so!” And he struck his forehead with rage.

I did not know whether to resent this language or pursue my explanation; but he seemed so powerfully affected that I took pity and proceeded with my dreams; affirming I had never heard the appellation of “Catherine Linton” before, but reading it often over produced an impression which personified itself when I had no longer my imagination under control. Heathcliff gradually fell back into the shelter of the bed, as I spoke; finally sitting down almost concealed behind it. I guessed, however, by his irregular and intercepted breathing, that he struggled to vanquish an excess of violent emotion. Not liking to show him that I had heard the conflict, I continued my toilette rather noisily, looked at my watch, and soliloquised on the length of the night: “Not three o’clock yet! I could have taken oath it had been six. Time stagnates here: we must surely have retired to rest at eight!”

“Always at nine in winter, and rise at four,” said my host, suppressing a groan: and, as I fancied by the motion of his arm’s shadow, dashing a tear from his eyes. “Mr. Lockwood,” he added, “you may go into my room: you’ll only

be in the way, coming downstairs so early; and your childish outcry has sent sleep to the devil for me."

"And for me, too," I replied. "I'll walk in the yard till daylight, and then I'll be off; and you need not dread a repetition of my intrusion. I'm now quite cured of seeking pleasure in society, be it country or town. A sensible man ought to find sufficient company in himself."

"Delightful company!" muttered Heathcliff. "Take the candle, and go where you please. I shall join you directly. Keep out of the yard, though, the dogs are unchained; and the house — Juno mounts sentinel there, and — nay, you can only ramble about the steps and passages. But, away with you! I'll come in two minutes!"

I obeyed, so far as to quit the chamber; when, ignorant where the narrow lobbies led, I stood still, and was witness, involuntarily, to a piece of superstition on the part of my landlord, which belied, oddly, his apparent sense. He got on to the bed, and wrenched open the lattice, bursting, as he pulled at it, into an uncontrollable passion of tears. "Come in! come in!" he sobbed. "Cathy, do come. Oh do — *once* more! Oh! my heart's darling; hear me *this* time, Catherine, at last!" The spectre showed a spectre's ordinary caprice: it gave no sign of being; but the snow and wind whirled wildly through, even reaching my station, and blowing out the light.

There was such an anguish in the gush of grief that accompanied this raving, that my compassion made me overlook its folly, and I drew off, half angry to have listened at all, and vexed at having related my ridiculous nightmare, since it produced that agony; though *why*, was beyond my comprehension. I descended cautiously to the lower regions, and landed in the back kitchen, where a gleam of fire, raked compactly together, enabled me to rekindle my candle. Nothing was stirring except a brindled, grey cat, which crept from the ashes, and saluted me with a querulous mew.

Two benches, shaped in sections of a circle, nearly enclosed the hearth; on one of these I stretched myself, and Grimalkin mounted the other. We were both of us nodding, ere any one invaded our retreat, and then it was Joseph, shuffling down a wooden ladder that vanished in the roof, through a trap: the ascent to his garret, I suppose. He cast a sinister look at the little flame which I had enticed to play between the ribs, swept the cat from its elevation, and bestowing himself in the vacancy, commenced the operation of stuffing a three-inch pipe with tobacco. My presence in his sanctum was evidently esteemed a piece of impudence too shameful for remark: he silently applied the tube to his lips, folded his arms, and puffed away. I let him enjoy the luxury unannoyed; and after sucking out his last wreath, and heaving a profound sigh, he got up, and departed as solemnly as he came.

A more elastic footstep entered next; and now I opened my mouth for a "good morning," but closed it again, the salutation unachieved; for Hareton

Earnshaw was performing his orisons *sotto voce*, in a series of curses directed against every object he touched, while he rummaged a corner for a spade or shovel to dig through the drifts. He glanced over the back of the bench, dilating his nostrils, and thought as little of exchanging civilities with me as with my companion the cat. I guessed, by his preparations, that egress was allowed, and, leaving my hard couch, made a movement to follow him. He noticed this, and thrust at an inner door with the end of his spade, intimating by an inarticulate sound that there was the place where I must go, if I changed my locality.

It opened into the house, where the females were already astir. Zillah urging flakes of flame up the chimney with a colossal bellows; and Mrs. Heathcliff, kneeling on the hearth, reading a book by the aid of the blaze. She held her hand interposed between the furnace-heat and her eyes, and seemed absorbed in her occupation; desisting from it only to chide the servant for covering her with sparks, or to push away a dog, now and then, that snoozled its nose over forwardly into her face. I was surprised to see Heathcliff there also. He stood by the fire, his back towards me, just finishing a stormy scene to poor Zillah; who ever and anon interrupted her labour to pluck up the corner of her apron, and heave an indignant groan.

"And you, you worthless" — he broke out as I entered, turning to his daughter-in-law, and employing an epithet as harmless as duck, or sheep, but generally represented by a dash —. "There you are, at your idle tricks again! The rest of them do earn their bread — you live on my charity! Put your trash away, and find something to do. You shall pay me for the plague of having you eternally in my sight — do you hear, damnable jade?"

"I'll put my trash away, because you can make me, if I refuse," answered the young lady, closing her book, and throwing it on a chair. "But I'll not do anything, though you should swear your tongue out, except what I please!"

Heathcliff lifted his hand, and the speaker sprang to a safer distance, obviously acquainted with its weight. Having no desire to be entertained by a cat-and-dog combat, I stepped forward briskly, as if eager to partake the warmth of the hearth, and innocent of any knowledge of the interrupted dispute. Each had enough decorum to suspend further hostilities: Heathcliff placed his fists, out of temptation, in his pockets; Mrs. Heathcliff curled her lip, and walked to a seat far off, where she kept her word by playing the part of a statue during the remainder of my stay. That was not long. I declined joining their breakfast, and, at the first gleam of dawn, took an opportunity of escaping into the free air, now clear, and still, and cold as impalpable ice.

My landlord hallooed for me to stop, ere I reached the bottom of the garden, and offered to accompany me across the moor. It was well he did, for the whole hill-back was one billowy, white ocean; the swells and falls not indicating corresponding rises and depressions in the ground: many pits, at least, were filled to a level; and entire ranges of mounds, the refuse of the quarries, blotted

from the chart which my yesterday's walk left pictured in my mind. I had remarked on one side of the road, at intervals of six or seven yards, a line of upright stones, continued through the whole length of the barren: these were erected, and daubed with lime on the purpose to serve as guides in the dark; and also when a fall, like the present, confounded the deep swamps on either hand with the firmer path: but, excepting a dirty dot pointing up here and there, all traces of their existence had vanished: and my companion found it necessary to warn me frequently to steer to the right or left, when I imagined I was following, correctly, the windings of the road. We exchanged little conversation, and he halted at the entrance of Thrushcross Park, saying, I could make no error there. Our audieux were limited to a hasty bow, and then I pushed forward, trusting to my own resources; for the porter's lodge is untenanted as yet. The distance from the gate to the Grange is two miles: I believe I managed to make it four; what with losing myself among the trees, and sinking up to the neck in snow: a predicament which only those who have experienced it can appreciate. At any rate, whatever were my wanderings, the clock chimed twelve as I entered the house; and that gave me exactly an hour for every mile of the usual way from Wuthering Heights.

My human fixture and her satellites rushed to welcome me; exclaiming, tumultuously, they had completely given me up; everybody conjectured that I had perished last night; and they were wondering how they must set about the search for my remains. I bid them be quiet, now that they saw me returned, and, benumbed to my very heart, I dragged upstairs; whence, after putting on dry clothes, and pacing to and fro thirty or forty minutes, to restore the animal heat, I am adjourned to my study, feeble as a kitten: almost too much so to enjoy the cheerful fire and smoking coffee which the servant has prepared for my refreshment.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Identify Thrushcross Grange; Zillah; Juno; Jakes Branderham.
2. Who are the members of the "pleasant family circle" at Wuthering Heights?
3. What happens when Lockwood tries to borrow a lantern to find his way home in the storm? Who comes to his rescue?
4. What writings does Lockwood find in his bedchamber? What part do they play in his nightmare?
5. What does Heathcliff do after Lockwood tells him his dream?
6. Characterize Mrs. Heathcliff. What is her relationship to Mr. Heathcliff? How does she react to his treatment of her?
7. Is Hareton Earnshaw more or less hospitable than the others? Why does he decide not to guide Lockwood home?
8. Explain the name "Wuthering Heights." How does it contribute to the atmosphere of the novel?



9. What is the chief conflict between Mrs. Heathcliff and Joseph? What did Catherine Linton think of Joseph?

10. What does the device of a narrator contribute to the development of the plot? Characterize Mr. Lockwood.

Mark Twain

## The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

*For a biographical sketch of Mark Twain, see page 718.*

### CHAPTER XVI

#### *The Rattlesnake-skin Does Its Work*

We slept most all day, and started out at night, a little ways behind a monstrous long raft that was as long going by as a procession. She had four long sweeps at each end, so we judged she carried as many as thirty men, likely. She had five big wigwams aboard, wide apart, and an open campfire in the middle, and a tall flag-pole at each end. There was a power of style about her. It *amounted* to something being a raftsmen on such a craft as that.

We went drifting down into a big bend, and the night clouded up and got hot. The river was very wide, and was walled with solid timber on both sides; you couldn't see a break in it hardly ever, or a light. We talked about Cairo, and wondered whether we would know it when we got to it. I said likely we wouldn't, because I had heard say there warn't but about a dozen houses there, and if they didn't happen to have them lit up, how was we going to know we was passing a town? Jim said if the two big rivers joined together there, that would show. But I said maybe we might think we was passing the foot of an island and coming into the same old river again. That disturbed Jim — and me too. So the question was, what to do? I said, paddle ashore the first time a light showed, and tell them pap was behind, coming along with a trading-scow, and was a green hand at the business, and wanted to know how far it was to Cairo. Jim thought it was a good idea, so we took a smoke on it and waited.

There warn't nothing to do now but to look out sharp for the town, and not pass it without seeing it. He said he'd be mighty sure to see it, because he'd be a

free man the minute he seen it, but if he missed it he'd be in a slave country again and no more show for freedom. Every little while he jumps up and says: "Dah she is?"

But it warn't. It was Jack-o'-lanterns, or lightning-bugs; so he set down again, and went to watching, same as before. Jim said it made him all over trembly and feverish to be so close to freedom. Well, I can tell you it made me all over trembly and feverish, too, to hear him, because I begun to get it through my head that he *was* most free — and who was to blame for it? Why, *me*. I couldn't get that out of my conscience, no how nor no way. It got to troubling me so I couldn't rest; I couldn't stay still in one place. It hadn't ever come home to me before, what this thing was that I was doing. But now it did; and it stayed with me, and scorched me more and more. I tried to make out to myself that *I* warn't to blame, because *I* didn't run Jim off from his rightful owner; but it warn't no use, conscience up and says, every time, "But you knowed he was running for his freedom, and you could 'a' paddled ashore and told somebody." That was so — I couldn't get around that no way. That was where it pinched. Conscience says to me, "What had poor Miss Watson done to you that you could see her nigger go off right under your eyes and never say one single word? What did that poor old woman do to you that you could treat her so mean? Why, she tried to learn you your book, she tried to learn you your manners, she tried to be good to you every way she knowed how. *That's* what she done."

I got to feeling so mean and so miserable I most wished I was dead. I fidgeted up and down the raft, abusing myself to myself, and Jim was fidgeting up and down past me. We neither of us could keep still. Every time he danced around and says, "Dah's Cairo!" it went through me like a shot, and I thought if it *was* Cairo I reckoned I would die of miserableness.

Jim talked out loud all the time while I was talking to myself. He was saying how the first thing he would do when he got to a free state he would go to saving up money and never spend a single cent, and when he got enough he would buy his wife, which was owned on a farm close to where Miss Watson lived; and then they would both work to buy the two children, and if their master wouldn't sell them, they'd get an Ab'litionist to go and steal them.

It most froze me to hear such talk. He wouldn't ever dared to talk such talk in his life before. Just see what a difference it made in him the minute he judged he was about free. It was according to the old saying, "Give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell." Thinks I, this is what comes of my not thinking. Here was this nigger, which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children — children that belonged to a man I didn't even know; a man that hadn't ever done me no harm.

I was sorry to hear Jim say that, it was such a lowering of him. My conscience got to stirring me up hotter than ever, until at last I says to it, "Let up

on me — it ain't too late yet — I'll paddle ashore at the first light and tell." I felt easy and happy and light as a feather right off. All my troubles was gone. I went to looking out sharp for a light, and sort of singing to myself. By and by one showed. Jim sings out:

"We's safe, Huck, we's safe! Jump up and crack yo' heels! Dat's de good ole Cairo at las', I jis knows it!"

I says:

"I'll take the canoe and go and see, Jim. It mightn't be, you know."

He jumped and got the canoe ready, and put his old coat in the bottom for me to set on, and give me the paddle; and as I shoved off, he says:

"Pooty soon I'll be a-shout'n' for joy, en I'll say, it's all on accounts o' Huck; I's a free man, en I couldn't ever ben free ef it hadn't ben for Huck; Huck done it. Jim won't ever forgit you, Huck; you's de bes' fren' Jim's ever had; en you's de *only* fren' ole Jim's got now."

I was paddling off, all in a sweat to tell on him; but when he says this, it seemed to kind of take the tuck all out of me. I went along slow then, and I warn't right down certain whether I was glad I started or whether I warn't. When I was fifty yards off, Jim says:

"Dah you goes, de ole true Huck; de on'y white genlman dat ever kep' his promise to ole Jim."

Well, I just felt sick. But I says, I *got* to do it — I can't get *out* of it. Right then along comes a skiff with two men in it with guns, and they stopped and I stopped. One of them says:

"What's that yonder?"

"A piece of raft," I says.

"Do you belong on it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any men on it?"

"Only one, sir."

"Well, there's five niggers run off to-night up yonder, above the head of the bend. Is your man white or black?"

I didn't answer up promptly. I tried to, but the words wouldn't come. I tried for a second or two to brace up and out with it, but I warn't man enough — hadn't the spunk of a rabbit. I see I was weakening; so I just give up trying, and up and says:

"He's white."

"I reckon we'll go and see for ourselves."

"I wish you would," says I, "because it's pap that's there, and maybe you'd help me tow the raft ashore where the light is. He's sick — and so is mam and Mary Ann."

"Oh, the devil! we're in a hurry, boy. But I s'pose we've got to. Come, buckle to your paddle, and let's get along."

I buckled to my paddle and they laid to their oars. When we had made a stroke or two, I says:

"Pap'll be mighty much obleeged to you, I can tell you. Everybody goes away when I want them to help me tow the raft ashore, and I can't do it by myself."

"Well, that's infernal mean. Odd, too. Say, boy, what's the matter with your father?"

"It's the — a — the — well, it ain't anything much."

They stopped pulling. It warn't but a mighty little ways to the raft now. One says:

"Boy, that's a lie. What *is* the matter with your pap? Answer up square now, and it'll be the better for you."

"I will, sir, I will, honest — but don't leave us, please. It's the — the — Gentlemen, if you'll only pull ahead, and let me heave you the headline, you won't have to come a-near the raft — please do."

"Set her back, John, set her back!" says one. They backed water. "Keep away, boy — keep to looard. Confound it, I just expect the wind has blowed it to us. Your pap's got the smallpox, and you know it precious well. Why didn't you come out and say so? Do you want to spread it all over?"

"Well," says I, a-blubbering, "I've told everybody before, and they just went away and left us."

"Poor devil, there's something in that. We are right down sorry for you, but we — well, hang it, we don't want the smallpox, you see. Look here, I'll tell you what to do. Don't you try to land by yourself, or you'll smash everything to pieces. You float along down about twenty miles, and you'll come to a town on the left-hand side of the river. It will be long after sun-up then, and when you ask for help you tell them your folks are all down with chills and fever. Don't be a fool again, and let people guess what is the matter. Now we're trying to do you a kindness; so you just put twenty miles between us, that's a good boy. It wouldn't do any good to land yonder where the light is — it's only a wood-yard. Say, I reckon your father's poor, and I'm bound to say he's in pretty hard luck. Here, I'll put a twenty-dollar gold piece on this board, and you get it when it floats by. I feel mighty mean to leave you; but my kingdom! it won't do to fool with smallpox, don't you see?"

"Hold on, Parker," says the man, "here's a twenty to put on the board for me. Good-by, boy; you do as Mr. Parker told you, and you'll be all right."

"That's so, my boy — good-by, good-by. If you see any runaway niggers you get help and nab them, and you can make some money by it."

"Good-by, sir," says I; "I won't let no runaway niggers get by me if I can help it."

They went off and I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knowed very well I had done wrong, and I see it warn't no use for me to try to learn to do right; a body that don't get *started* right when he's little ain't got no

show — when the pinch comes there ain't nothing to back him up and keep him to his work, and so he gets beat. Then I thought a minute, and says to myself, hold on; s'pose you'd'a' done right and give Jim up, would you felt better than what you do now? No, says I, I'd feel bad — I'd feel just the same way I do now. Well, then, says I, what's the use you learning to do right when it's troublesome to do right and ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same? I was stuck. I couldn't answer that. So I reckoned I wouldn't bother no more about it, but after this always do whichever come handiest at the time.

I went into the wigwam; Jim warn't there. I looked all around; he warn't anywhere. I says:

“Jim!”

“Here I is, Huck. Is dey out o' sight yit? Don't talk loud.”

He was in the river under the stern oar, with just his nose out. I told him they were out of sight, so he come aboard. He says:

“I was a-listenin' to all de talk, en I slips into de river en was gwyne to shove for sho' if dey come aboard. Den I was gwyne to swim to de raf' agin when dey was gone. But lawsy, how you did fool 'em, Huck! Dat *wuz* de smartes' dodge! I tell you, chile, I 'spec it save' ole Jim — ole Jim ain't going to forgit you for dat, honey.”

Then we talked about the money. It was a pretty good raise — twenty dollars apiece. Jim said we could take deck passage on a steamboat now, and the money would last us as far as we wanted to go in the free states. He said twenty mile more warn't far for the raft to go, but he wished we was already there.

Towards daybreak we tied up, and Jim was mighty particular about hiding the raft good. Then he worked all day fixing things in bundles, and getting all ready to quit rafting.

That night about ten we hove in sight of the lights of a town away down in a left-hand bend.

I went off in the canoe to ask about it. Pretty soon I found a man out in the river with a skiff, setting a trot-line. I ranged up and says:

“Mister, is that town Cairo?”

“Cairo? no. You must be a blame' fool.”

“What town is it, mister?”

“If you want to know, go and find out. If you stay here botherin' around me for about a half a minute longer you'll get something you won't want.”

I paddled to the raft. Jim was awful disappointed, but I said never mind, Cairo would be the next place, I reckoned.

We passed another town before daylight, and I was going out again; but it was high ground, so I didn't go. No high ground about Cairo, Jim said. I had forgot it. We laid up for the day on a towhead tolerable close to the left-hand bank. I begun to suspicion something. So did Jim. I says:

"Maybe we went by Cairo in the fog that night."

He says:

"Doan' le's talk about it, Huck. Po' niggers can't have no luck. I alwuz 'spected dat rattlesnake-skin warn't done wid its work."

"I wish I'd never seen that snake-skin, Jim — I do wish I'd never laid eyes on it."

"It ain't yo' fault, Huck; you didn't know. Don't you blame yo'self 'bout it."

When it was daylight, here was the clear Ohio water inshore, sure enough, and outside was the old regular Muddy! So it was all up with Cairo.

We talked it all over. It wouldn't do to take to the shore; we couldn't take the raft up the stream, of course. There warn't no way but to wait for dark, and start back in the canoe and take the chances. So we slept all day amongst the cottonwood thicket, so as to be fresh for the work, and when we went back to the raft about dark the canoe was gone!

We didn't say a word for a good while. There warn't anything to say. We both knowed well enough it was some more work of the rattlesnake-skin; so what was the use to talk about it? It would only look like we was finding fault, and that would be bound to fetch more bad luck — and keep on fetching it, too, till we knowed enough to keep still.

By and by we talked about what we better do, and found there warn't no way but just to go along down with the raft till we got a chance to buy a canoe to go back in. We warn't going to borrow it when there warn't anybody around, the way pap would do, for that might set people after us.

So we shoved out after dark on the raft.

Anybody that don't believe yet that it's foolishness to handle a snake-skin, after all that that snake-skin done for us, will believe it now if they read on and see what more it done for us.

The place to buy canoes is off of rafts laying up at shore. But we didn't see no rafts laying up; so we went along during three hours and more. Well, the night got gray and ruther thick, which is the next meanest thing to fog. You can't tell the shape of the river, and you can't see no distance. It got to be very late and still, and then along comes a steamboat up the river. We lit the lantern, and judged she would see it. Upstream boats didn't generly come close to us; they go out and follow the bars and hunt for easy water under the reefs; but nights like this they bull right up the channel against the whole river.

We could hear her pounding along, but we didn't see her good till she was close. She aimed right for us. Often they do that and try to see how close they can come without touching; sometimes the wheel bites off a sweep, and then the pilot sticks his head out and laughs, and thinks he's mighty smart. Well, here she comes, and we said she was going to try and shave us; but she didn't seem to be sheering off a bit. She was a big one, and she was coming in a hurry, too, looking like a black cloud with rows of glow-worms around it; but all of a sud-

den she bulged out, big and scary, with a long row of wide-open furnace doors shining like red-hot teeth, and her monstrous bows and guards hanging right over us. There was a yell at us, and a jingling of bells to stop the engines, a pow-wow of cussing, and whistling of steam — and as Jim went overboard on one side and I on the other, she come smashing straight through the raft.

I dived — and I aimed to find the bottom, too, for a thirty-foot wheel had got to go over me, and I wanted it to have plenty of room. I could always stay under water a minute; this time I reckoned I stayed under a minute and a half. Then I bounced for the top in a hurry, for I was nearly busting. I popped out to my armpits and blowed the water out of my nose, and puffed a bit. Of course there was a booming current; and of course that boat started her engines again ten seconds after she stopped them, for they never cared much for raftsmen; so now she was churning along up the river, out of sight in the thick weather, though I could hear her.

I sung out for Jim about a dozen times, but I didn't get any answer; so I grabbed a plank that touched me while I was "treading water," and struck out for shore, shoving it ahead of me. But I made out to see that the drift of the current was towards the left-hand shore, which meant that I was in a crossing; so I changed off and went that way.

It was one of these long, slanting, two-mile crossings; so I was a good long time in getting over. I made a safe landing, and clumb up the bank. I couldn't see but a little ways, but I went poking along over rough ground for a quarter of a mile or more, and then I run across a big old-fashioned double log house before I noticed it. I was going to rush by and get away, but a lot of dogs jumped out and went to howling and barking at me, and I knowed better than to move another peg.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *The Grangerfords Take Me In*

In about a minute somebody spoke out of a window without putting his head out, and says:

"Be done, boys! Who's there?"

I says:

"It's me."

"Who's me?"

"George Jackson, sir."

"What do you want?"

"I don't want nothing, sir. I only want to go along by, but the dogs won't let me."

"What are you prowling around here this time of night for — hey?"

"I warn't prowling around, sir; I fell overboard off of the steamboat."

"Oh, you did, did you? Strike a light there, somebody. What did you say your name was?"

"George Jackson, sir. I'm only a boy."

"Look here, if you're telling the truth you needn't be afraid — nobody'll hurt you. But don't try to budge; stand right where you are. Rouse out Bob and Tom, some of you, and fetch the guns. George Jackson, is there anybody with you?"

"No, sir, nobody."

I heard the people stirring around in the house now, and see a light. The man sung out:

"Snatch that light away, Betsy, you old fool — ain't you got any sense? Put it on the floor behind the front door. Bob, if you and Tom are ready, take your places."

"All ready."

"Now, George Jackson, do you know the Shepherdsons?"

"No, sir; I never heard of them."

"Well, that may be so, and it mayn't. Now, all ready. Step forward, George Jackson. And mind, don't you hurry — come mighty slow. If there's anybody with you, let him keep back — if he shows himself he'll be shot. Come along now. Come slow; push the door open yourself — just enough to squeeze in, d'you hear?"

I didn't hurry; I couldn't if I'd a-wanted to. I took one slow step at a time and there warn't a sound, only I thought I could hear my heart. The dogs were as still as the humans, but they followed a little behind me. When I got to the three log doorsteps I heard them unlocking and unbarring and unbolting. I put my hand on the door and pushed it a little and a little more till somebody said, "There, that's enough — put your head in." I done it, but I judged they would take it off.

The candle was on the floor, and there they all was, looking at me, and me at them, for about a quarter of a minute: Three big men with guns pointed at me, which made me wince, I tell you; the oldest, gray and about sixty, the other two thirty or more — all of them fine and handsome — and the sweetest old gray-headed lady, and back of her two young women which I couldn't see right well. The old gentleman says:

"There; I reckon it's all right. Come in."

As soon as I was in the old gentleman he locked the door and barred it and bolted it, and told the young men to come in with their guns, and they all went in a big parlor that had a new rag carpet on the floor, and got together in a corner that was out of the range of the front windows — there warn't none on the side. They held the candle, and took a good look at me, and all said, "Why, *he* ain't a Shepherdson — no, there ain't any Shepherdson about him." Then the old man said he hoped I wouldn't mind being searched for arms, because he



didn't mean no harm by it — it was only to make sure. So he didn't pry into my pockets, but only felt out side with his hands, and said it was all right. He told me to make myself easy and at home, and tell all about myself; but the old lady says:

"Why, bless you, Saul, the poor thing's as wet as he can be; and don't you reckon it may be he's hungry?"

"True for you, Rachel — I forgot."

So the old lady says:

"Betsy" (this was a nigger woman), "you fly around and get him something to eat as quick as you can, poor thing; and one of you girls go and wake up Buck and tell him — oh, here he is himself. Buck, take this little stranger and get the wet clothes off from him and dress him up in some of yours that's dry."

Buck looked about as old as me — thirteen or fourteen or along there, though he was a little bigger than me. He hadn't on anything but a shirt, and he was very frowzy-headed. He came in gaping and digging one fist in his eyes, and he was dragging a gun along with the other one. He says:

"Ain't they no Shepherdsons around?"

They said, no, 'twas a false alarm.

"Well," he says, "if they'd 'a' ben some, I reckon I'd 'a' got one."

They all laughed, and Bob says:

"Why, Buck, they might have scalped us all, you've been so slow in coming."

"Well, nobody come after me, and it ain't right. I'm always kept down; I don't get no show."

"Never mind, Buck, my boy," says the old man, "you'll have show enough, all in good time, don't you fret about that. Go 'long with you now, and do as your mother told you."

When we got up-stairs to his room he got me a coarse shirt and a roundabout and pants of his, and I put them on. While I was at it he asked me what my name was, but before I could tell him he started to tell me about a bluejay and a young rabbit he had caught in the woods day before yesterday, and he asked me where Moses was when the candle went out. I said I didn't know; I hadn't heard about it before, no way.

"Well, guess," he says.

"How'm I going to guess," says I, "when I never heard tell of it before?"

"But you can guess, can't you? It's just as easy."

"Which candle?" I says.

"Why, any candle," he says.

"I don't know where he was," says I; "where was he?"

"Why, he was in the *dark*! That's where he was!"

"Well, if you knowed where he was, what did you ask me for?"

"Why, blame it, it's a riddle, don't you see? Say, how long are you going to stay here? You got to stay always. We can just have booming times — they

don't have no school now. Do you own a dog? I've got a dog — and he'll go in the river and bring out chips that you throw in. Do you like to comb up Sundays, and all that kind of foolishness? You bet I don't, but ma she makes me. Confound these ole britches! I reckon I'd better put 'em on, but I'd rather not, it's so warm. Are you all ready? All right. Come along, old hoss."

Cold corn-pone, cold corn-beef, butter and butter-milk — that is what they had for me down there, and there ain't nothing better that ever I've come across yet. Buck and his ma and all of them smoked cob pipes, except the nigger woman, which was gone, and the two young women. They all smoked and talked, and I eat and talked. The young women had quilts around them, and their hair down their backs. They all asked me questions, and I told them how pap and me and all the family was living on a little farm down at the bottom of Arkansaw, and my sister Mary Ann run off and got married and never was heard of no more, and Bill went to hunt them and he warn't heard of no more, and Tom and Mort died, and then there warn't nobody but just me and pap left, and he was just trimmed down to nothing, on account of his troubles; so when he died I took what there was left, because the farm didn't belong to us, and started up the river, deck passage, and fell overboard; and that was how I come to be here. So they said I could have a home there as long as I wanted it. Then it was most daylight and everybody went to bed, and I went to bed with Buck, and when I waked up in the morning, drat it all, I had forgot what my name was. So I laid there about an hour trying to think, and when Buck waked up I says:

"Can you spell, Buck?"

"Yes," he says.

"I bet you can't spell my name," says I.

"I bet you what you dare I can," says he.

"All right," says I, "go ahead."

"G-e-o-r-g-e J-a-x-o-n — there now," he says.

"Well," says I, "you done it, but I didn't think you could. It ain't no slouch of a name to spell — right off without studying."

I set it down, private, because somebody might want *me* to spell it next, and so I wanted to be handy with it and rattle it off like I was used to it.

It was a mighty nice family, and a mighty nice house, too. I hadn't seen no house out in the country before that was so nice and had so much style. It didn't have an iron latch on the front door, nor a wooden one with a buckskin string, but a brass knob to turn, the same as houses in town. There warn't no bed in the parlor, nor a sign of a bed; but heaps of parlors in towns has beds in them. There was a big fireplace that was bricked on the bottom, and the bricks was kept clean and red by pouring water on them and scrubbing them with another brick; sometimes they wash them over with red water-paint that they call Spanish-brown, same as they do in town. They had big brass dog-irons that

could hold up a saw-log. There was a clock on the middle of the mantelpiece, with a picture of a town painted on the bottom half of the glass front, and a round place in the middle of it for the sun, and you could see the pendulum swinging behind it. It was beautiful to hear that clock tick; and sometimes when one of these peddlers had been along and scoured her up and got her in good shape she would start in and strike a hundred and fifty before she got tucked out. They wouldn't took any money for her.

Well, there was a big outlandish parrot on each side of the clock, made out of something like chalk, and painted up gaudy. By one of the parrots was a cat made of crockery, and a crockery dog by the other; and when you pressed down on them they squeaked, but didn't open their mouths nor look different nor interested. They squeaked through underneath. There was a couple of big wild-turkey-wing fans spread out behind those things. On the table in the middle of the room was a kind of a lovely crockery basket that had apples and oranges and peaches and grapes piled up in it, which was much redder and yellower and prettier than real ones is, but they warn't real because you could see where pieces had got chipped off and showed the white chalk, or whatever it was, underneath.

This table had a cover made out of beautiful oil-cloth, with a red and blue spread-eagle painted on it, and a painted border all around. It come all the way from Philadelphia, they said. There was some books, too, piled up perfectly exact, on each corner of the table. One was a big family Bible full of pictures. One was *Pilgrim's Progress*, about a man that left his family, it didn't say why. I read considerable in it now and then. The statements was interesting, but tough. Another was *Friendship's Offering*, full of beautiful stuff and poetry; but I didn't read the poetry. Another was Henry Clay's Speeches, and another was Dr. Gunn's *Family Medicine*, which told you all about what to do if a body was sick or dead. There was a hymn-book, and a lot of other books. And there was nice split-bottom chairs, and perfectly sound, too — not bagged down in the middle and busted, like an old basket.

They had pictures hung on the walls — mainly Washingtons and Lafayettes, and battles, and Highland Marys, and one called "Signing the Declaration." There was some that they called crayons, which one of the daughters which was dead made her own self when she was only fifteen years old. They was different from any pictures I ever see before — blacker, mostly; than is common. One was a woman in a slim black dress, belted small under the armpits, with bulges like a cabbage in the middle of the sleeves, and a large black scoop-shovel bonnet with a black veil, and white slim ankles crossed about with black tape, and very wee black slippers, like a chisel, and she was leaning pensive on a tombstone on her right elbow, under a weeping willow, and her other hand hanging down her side holding a white handkerchief and a reticule, and underneath the picture it said "Shall I Never See Thee More Alas." Another one was

a young lady with her hair all combed up straight to the top of her head, and knotted there in front of a comb like a chair-back, and she was crying into a handkerchief and had a dead bird laying on its back in her other hand with its heels up, and underneath the picture it said "I Shall Never Hear Thy Sweet Chirrup More Alas." There was one where a young lady was at a window looking up at the moon, and tears running down her cheeks; and she had an open letter in one hand with black sealing-wax showing on one edge of it, and she was mashing a locket with a chain to it against her mouth, and underneath the picture it said "And Art Thou Gone Yes Thou Art Gone Alas." These was all nice pictures, I reckon, but I didn't somehow seem to take to them, because if ever I was down a little they always give me the fantods. Everybody was sorry she died, because she had laid out a lot more of these pictures to do, and a body could see by what she had done what they had lost. But I reckoned that with her disposition she was having a better time in the graveyard. She was at work on what they said was her greatest picture when she took sick, and every day and every night it was her prayer to be allowed to live till she got it done, but she never got the chance. It was a picture of a young woman in a long white gown, standing on the rail of a bridge all ready to jump off, with her hair all down her back, and looking up to the moon, with the tears running down her face, and she had two arms folded across her breast, and two arms stretched out in front, and two more reaching up toward the moon — and the idea was to see which pair would look best, and then scratch out all the other arms; but, as I was saying, she died before she got her mind made up, and now they kept this picture over the head of the bed in her room, and every time her birthday come they hung flowers on it. Other times it was hid with a little curtain. The young woman in the picture had a kind of a nice sweet face, but there was so many arms it made her look too spidery, seemed to me.

This young girl kept a scrap-book when she was alive, and used to paste obituaries and accidents and cases of patient suffering in it out of the *Presbyterian Observer*, and write poetry after them out of her own head. It was very good poetry. This is what she wrote about a boy by the name of Stephen Dowling Bots that fell down a well and was drowned:

#### ODE TO STEPHEN DOWLING BOTS, DEC'D

And did young Stephen sicken,  
 And did young Stephen die?  
 And did the sad hearts thicken,  
 And did the mourners cry?

No; such was not the fate of  
 Young Stephen Dowling Bots;  
 Though sad hearts round him thickened,  
 'Twas not from sickness' shots.

No whooping-cough did rack his frame,  
 Nor measles drear with spots;  
 Not these impaired the sacred name  
 Of Stephen Dowling Bots.

Despised love struck not with woe  
 That head of curly knots,  
 Nor stomach troubles laid him low,  
 Young Stephen Dowling Bots.

O no. Then list with tearful eye,  
 Whilst I his fate do tell.  
 His soul did from this cold world fly  
 By falling down a well.

They got him out and emptied him;  
 Alas it was too late;  
 His spirit was gone for to sport aloft  
 In the realms of the good and great.

If Emmeline Grangerford could make poetry like that before she was fourteen, there ain't no telling what she could 'a' done by and by. Buck said she could rattle off poetry like nothing. She didn't ever have to stop to think. He said she would slap down a line, and if she couldn't find anything to rhyme with it would just scratch it out and slap down another one, and go ahead. She warn't particular; she could write about anything you choose to give her to write about just so it was sadful. Every time a man died, or a woman died, or a child died, she would be on hand with her "tribute" before he was cold. She called them tributes. The neighbors said it was the doctor first, then Emmeline, then the undertaker — the undertaker never got in ahead of Emmeline but once, and then she hung fire on a rhyme for the dead person's name, which was Whistler. She warn't ever the same after that; she never complained, but she kinder pined away and did not live long. Poor thing, many's the time I made myself go up to the little room that used to be hers and get out her poor old scrap-book and read in it when her pictures had been aggravating me and I had soured on her a little. I liked all that family, dead ones and all, and warn't going to let anything come between us. Poor Emmeline made poetry about all the dead people when she was alive, and it didn't seem right that there warn't nobody to make some about her now she was gone; so I tried to sweat out a verse or two myself, but I couldn't seem to make it go somehow. They kept Emmeline's room trim and nice, and all the things fixed in it just the way she liked to have them when she was alive, and nobody ever slept there. The old lady took care of the room herself, though there was plenty of niggers, and she sewed there a good deal and read her Bible there mostly.

Well, as I was saying about the parlor, there was beautiful curtains on the

windows: white, with pictures painted on them of castles with vines all down the walls, and cattle coming down to drink. There was a little old piano, too, that had tin pans in it, I reckon, and nothing was ever so lovely as to hear the young ladies sing "The Last Link is Broken" and play "The Battle of Prague" on it. The walls of all the rooms was plastered, and most had carpets on the floors, and the whole house was whitewashed on the outside.

It was a double house, and the big open place betwixt them was roofed and floored, and sometimes the table was set there in the middle of the day, and it was a cool, comfortable place. Nothing couldn't be better. And warn't the cooking good, and just bushels of it too!

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *Why Harney Rode Away for His Hat*

Col. Grangerford was a gentleman, you see. He was a gentleman all over; and so was his family. He was well born, as the saying is, and that's worth as much in a man as it is in a horse, so the Widow Douglas said, and nobody ever denied that she was of the first aristocracy in our town; and pap he always said it, too, though he warn't no more quality than a mudcat himself. Col. Grangerford was very tall and very slim, and had a darkish-paly complexion, not a sign of red in it anywheres; he was clean-shaved every morning all over his thin face, and he had the thinnest kind of lips, and the thinnest kind of nostrils, and a high nose, and heavy eyebrows, and the blackest kind of eyes, sunk so deep back that they seemed like they was looking out of caverns at you, as you may say. His forehead was high, and his hair was gray and straight and hung to his shoulders. His hands was long and thin, and every day of his life he put on a clean shirt and a full suit from head to foot made out of linen so white it hurt your eyes to look at it; and on Sundays he wore a blue tailcoat with brass buttons on it. He carried a mahogany cane with a silver head to it. There warn't no frivolishness about him, not a bit, and he warn't ever loud. He was as kind as he could be — you could feel that, you know, and so you had confidence. Sometimes he smiled, and it was good to see; but when he straightened himself up like a liberty-pole, and the lightning begun to flicker out from under his eyebrows, you wanted to climb a tree first, and find out what the matter was afterwards. He didn't ever have to tell anybody to mind their manners — everybody was always good-mannered where he was. Everybody loved to have him around, too; he was sunshine most always — I mean he made it seem like good weather. When he turned into a cloud-bank it was awful dark for half a minute, and that was enough; there wouldn't nothing go wrong again for a week.

When him and the old lady come down in the morning all the family got up out of their chairs and give them good day, and didn't set down again till

they had set down. Then Tom and Bob went to the sideboard where the decanter was, and mixed a glass of bitters and handed it to him, and he held it in his hand and waited till Tom's and Bob's was mixed, and then they bowed and said, "Our duty to you, sir, and madam"; and *they* bowed the least bit in the world and said thank you, and so they drank, all three, and Bob and Tom poured a spoonful of water on the sugar and the mite of whisky or apple-brandy in the bottom of their tumblers, and give it to me and Buck, and we drank to the old people too.

Bob was the oldest and Tom next — tall, beautiful men with very broad shoulders and brown faces, and long black hair and black eyes. They dressed in white linen from head to foot, like the old gentleman, and wore broad Panama hats.

Then there was Miss Charlotte; she was twenty-five, and tall and proud and grand, but as good as she could be when she warn't stirred up; but when she was she had a look that would make you wilt in your tracks, like her father. She was beautiful.

So was her sister, Miss Sophia, but it was a different kind. She was gentle and sweet like a dove, and she was only twenty.

Each person had their own nigger to wait on them — Buck too. My nigger had a monstrous easy time, because I warn't used to having anybody do anything for me, but Buck's was on the jump most of the time.

This was all there was of the family now, but there used to be more — three sons; they got killed; and Emmeline that died.

The old gentleman owned a lot of farms and over a hundred niggers. Sometimes a stack of people would come there, horseback, from ten or fifteen miles around, and stay five or six days, and have such junketings round about and on the river, and dances and picnics in the woods daytimes, and balls at the house nights. These people was mostly kinfolks of the family. The men brought their guns with them. It was a handsome lot of quality, I tell you.

There was another clan of aristocracy around there — five or six families — mostly of the name of Shepherdson. They was as high-toned and well born and rich and grand as the tribe of Grangerfords. The Shepherdsons and Grangerfords used the same steamboat-landing, which was about two mile above our house; so sometimes when I went up there with a lot of our folks I used to see a lot of the Shepherdsons there on their fine horses.

One day Buck and me was away out in the woods hunting, and heard a horse coming. We was crossing the road. Buck says:

"Quick! Jump for the woods!"

We done it, and then peeped down the woods through the leaves. Pretty soon a splendid young man came galloping down the road, setting his horse easy and looking like a soldier. He had his gun across his pommel. I had seen

him before. It was young Harney Shepherdson. I heard Buck's gun go off at my ear, and Harney's hat tumbled off from his head. He grabbed his gun and rode straight to the place where we was hid. But we didn't wait. We started through the woods on a run. The woods warn't thick, so I looked over my shoulder to dodge the bullet, and twice I seen Harney cover Buck with his gun; and then he rode away the way he come — to get his hat, I reckon, but I couldn't see. We never stopped running till we got home. The old gentleman's eyes blazed a minute — 'twas pleasure, mainly, I judged — then his face sort of smoothed down, and he says, kind of gentle:

"I don't like that shooting from behind a bush. Why didn't you step into the road, my boy?"

"The Shepherdsons don't, father. They always take advantage."

Miss Charlotte she held her head up like a queen while Buck was telling his tale, and her nostrils spread and her eyes snapped. The two young men looked dark, but never said nothing. Miss Sophia she turned pale, but the color come back when she found the man warn't hurt.

Soon as I could get Buck down by the corn-cribs under the trees by ourselves, I says:

"Did you want to kill him, Buck?"

"Well, I bet I did."

"What did he do to you?"

"Him? He never done nothing to me."

"Well, then, what did you want to kill him for?"

"Why, nothing — only it's on account of the feud."

"What's a feud?"

"Why, where was you raised? Don't you know what a feud is?"

"Never heard of it before — tell me about it."

"Well," says Buck, "a feud is this way: A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills *him*; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the *cousins* chip in — and by and by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time."

"Has this one been going on long, Buck?"

"Well, I should *reckon*! It started thirty year ago, or som'ers along there. There was trouble 'bout something, and then a lawsuit to settle it; and the suit went agin one of the men, and so he up and shot the man that won the suit — which he would naturally do, of course. Anybody would."

"What was the trouble about, Buck? — land?"

"I reckon maybe — I don't know."

"Well, who done the shooting? Was it a Grangerford or a Shepherdson?"

"Laws, how do *I* know? It was so long ago."

"Don't anybody know?"



"Oh, yes, pa knows, I reckon, and some of the other old people; but they don't know now what the row was about in the first place."

"Has there been many killed, Buck?"

"Yes; right smart chance of funerals. But they don't always kill. Pa's got a few buckshot in him; but he don't mind it 'cuz he don't weigh much, anyway. Bob's been carved up some with a bowie, and Tom's been hurt once or twice."

"Has anybody been killed this year, Buck?"

"Yes; we got one and they got one. 'Bout three months ago my cousin Bud, fourteen year old, was riding through the woods on t'other side of the river, and didn't have no weapon with him, which was blame' foolishness, and in a lonesome place he hears a horse a-coming behind him, and sees old Baldy Shepherdson a-linkin' after him with his gun in his hand and his white hair a-flying in the wind; and 'stead of jumping off and taking to the brush, Bud 'lowed he could outrun him; so they had it, nip and tuck, for five mile or more, the old man a-gaining all the time; so at last Bud seen it warn't any use, so he stopped and faced around so as to have the bullet-holes in front, you know, and the old man he rode up and shot him down. But he didn't git much chance to enjoy his luck, for inside of a week our folks laid *him* out."

"I reckon that old man was a coward, Buck."

"I reckon he *warn't* a coward. Not by a blame' sight. There ain't a coward amongst them Shepherdsons — not a one. And there ain't no cowards amongst the Grangerfords either. Why, that old man kep' up his end in a fight one day for half an hour against three Grangerfords, and come out winner. They was all a-horseback; he lit off of his horse and got behind a little woodpile, and kep' his horse before him to stop the bullets; but the Grangerfords stayed on their horses and capered around the old man, and peppered away at him, and he peppered away at them. Him and his horse both went home pretty leaky and crippled, but the Grangerfords had to be *fetched* home — and one of 'em was dead, and another died the next day. No, sir; if a body's out hunting for cowards he don't want to fool away any time amongst them Shepherdsons, becuz they don't breed any of that *kind*."

Next Sunday we all went to church, about three mile, everybody a-horseback. The men took their guns along, so did Buck, and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall. The Shepherdsons done the same. It was pretty ornery preaching — all about brotherly love, and such-like tire-someness; but everybody said it was a good sermon, and they all talked it over going home, and had such a powerful lot to say about faith and good works and free grace and preforeordination, and I don't know what all, that it did seem to me to be one of the roughest Sundays I had run across yet.

About an hour after dinner everybody was dozing around, some in their chairs and some in their rooms, and it got to be pretty dull. Buck and a dog was stretched out on the grass in the sun sound asleep. I went up to our room, and

judged I would take a nap myself. I found that sweet Miss Sophia standing in her door, which was next to ours, and she took me in her room and shut the door very soft, and asked me if I liked her, and I said I did; and she asked me if I would do something for her and not tell anybody, and I said I would. Then she said she'd forgot her Testament, and left it in the seat at church between two other books, and would I slip out quiet and go there and fetch it to her, and not say nothing to nobody. I said I would. So I slid out and slipped off up the road, and there warn't anybody at the church, except maybe a hog or two, for there warn't any lock on the door, and hogs likes a puncheon floor in summer-time because it's cool. If you notice, most folks don't go to church only when they've got to; but a hog is different.

Says I to myself, something's up; it ain't natural for a girl to be in such a sweat about a Testament. So I give it a shake, and out drops a little piece of paper with "*Half past two*" wrote on it with a pencil. I ransacked it, but couldn't find anything else. I couldn't make anything out of that, so I put the paper in the book again, and when I got home and upstairs there was Miss Sophia in her door waiting for me. She pulled me in and shut the door; then she looked in the Testament till she found the paper, and as soon as she read it she looked glad; and before a body could think she grabbed me and give me a squeeze, and said I was the best boy in the world, and not to tell anybody. She was mighty red in the face for a minute, and her eyes lighted up, and it made her powerful pretty. I was a good deal astonished, but when I got my breath I asked her what the paper was about, and she asked me if I had read it, and I said no, and she asked me if I could read writing, and I told her "no, only coarse-hand," and then she said the paper warn't anything but a book-mark to keep her place, and I might go and play now.

I went off down to the river, studying over this thing, and pretty soon I noticed that my nigger was following along behind. When we was out of sight of the house he looked back and around a second, and then comes a-running, and says:

"Mars Jawge, if you'll come down into de swamp I'll show you a whole stack o' water-moccasins."

Thinks I, that's mighty curious; he said that yesterday. He oughter know a body don't love water-moccasins enough to go around hunting for them. What is he up to, anyway? So I says:

"All right; trot ahead."

I followed a half a mile; then he struck out over the swamp, and waded ankle-deep as much as another half-mile. We come to a little flat piece of land which was dry and very thick with trees and bushes and vines, and he says:

"You shove right in dah jist a few steps, Mars Jawge; dah's whah dey is. I's seed 'm befo'; I don't k'yer to see 'em no mo'."

Then he slopped right along and went away, and pretty soon the trees hid

him. I poked into the place a ways and come to a little open patch as big as a bedroom all hung around with vines, and found a man laying there asleep—and, by jings, it was my old Jim!

I waked him up, and I reckoned it was going to be a grand surprise to him to see me again, but it warn't. He nearly cried he was so glad, but he warn't surprised. Said he swum along behind me that night, and heard me yell every time, but dasn't answer, because he didn't want nobody to pick *him* up and take him into slavery again. Says he:

"I got hurt a little, en couldn't swim fas', so I wuz a considerable ways behine you towards de las'; when you landed I reck'ned I could ketch up wid you on de lan' 'dout havin' to shout at you, but when I see dat house I begin to go slow. I 'uz off too fur to hear what dey say to you — I wuz 'fraid o' de dogs; but when it 'uz all quiet ag'in I knowed you's in de house, so I struck out for de woods to wait for day. Early in de mawnin' some er de niggers come along, gwyne to de fields, en dey tuk me en showed me dis place, whah de dogs can't track me on accounts o' de water, en dey brings me truck to eat every night, en tells me how you's a-gittin' along."

"Why didn't you tell my Jack to fetch me here sooner, Jim?"

"Well, 'twarn't no use to 'sturb you, Huck, tell we could do sumfn — but we're all right now. I ben a-buyin' pots en pans en vittles, as I got a chanst, en a-patchin' up de raf' nights when —"

"*What* raft, Jim?"

"Our ole raf'."

"You mean to say our old raft warn't smashed all to flinders?"

"No, she warn't. She was tore up a good deal — one en' of her was; but dey warn't no great harm done, on'y our traps was mos' all los'. Ef we hadn' dive' so deep en swum so fur under water, en de night hadn't ben so dark, en we warn't so sk'yerd, en ben sich punkin-heads, as de sayin' is, we'd a seed de raf'. But it's jis' as well we didn't, 'kase now she's all fixed up ag'in mos' as good as new, en we's got a new lot o' stuff, in de place o' what 'uz los'."

"Why, how did you get hold of the raft again, Jim — did you catch her?"

"How I gwyne to ketch her en I out in de woods? No; some er de niggers foun' her ketched on a snag along heah in de ben', en dey hid her in a crick 'mongst de willows, en dey wuz so much jawin' 'bout which un 'um she b'long to de mos' dat I come to heah 'bout it pooty soon, so I ups en settles de trouble by tellin' 'um she don't b'long to none uv 'um, but to you en me; en I ast 'm if dey gwyne to grab a young white genlman's propaty, en git a hid'n for it? Den I gin 'm ten cents apiece, en dey 'uz mighty well satisfied, en wisht some mo' raf's 'ud come along en make 'm rich ag'in. Dey's mighty good to me, dese niggers is, en whatever I wants 'm to do fur me I doan' have to ast 'm twice, honey. Dat Jack's a good nigger, en pooty smart."

"Yes, he is. He ain't ever told me you was here; told me to come, and he'd

show me a lot of water-moccasins. If anything happens *he* ain't mixed up in it. He can say he never seen us together, and it'll be the truth."

I don't want to talk much about the next day. I reckon I'll cut it pretty short. I waked up about dawn, and was a-going to turn over and go to sleep again when I noticed how still it was — didn't seem to be anybody stirring. That warn't usual. Next I noticed that Buck was up and gone. Well, I gets up, a-wondering, and goes down-stairs — nobody around; everything as still as a mouse. Just the same outside. Thinks I, what does it mean? Down by the woodpile I comes across my Jack, and says:

"What's it all about?"

Says he:

"Don't you know, Mars Jawge?"

"No," says I, "I don't."

"Well, den, Miss Sophia's run off! 'deed she has. She run off in de night some time — nobody don't know jis' when; run off to get married to dat young Harney Shepherdson, you know — leastways, so dey 'spec. De fambly foun' it out 'bout half an hour ago — maybe a little mo' — en' I *tell* you dey warn't no time los'. Sich another hurryin' up guns en hosses *you* never see! De women folks has gone for to stir up de relations, en ole Mars Saul en de boys tuck dey guns en rode up de river road for to try to ketch dat young man en kill him 'fo' he kin git acrost de river wid Miss Sophia. I reck'n dey's gwyne to be mighty rough times."

"Buck went off 'thout waking me up."

"Well, I reck'n he *did*! Dey warn't gwyne to mix you up in it. Mars Buck he loaded up his gun en 'lowed he's gwyne to fetch home a Shepherdson or bust. Well, dey'll be plenty un 'm dah, I reck'n, en you bet you he'll fetch one ef he gits a chanst."

I took up the river road as hard as I could put. By and by I begin to hear guns a good ways off. When I came in sight of the log store and the woodpile where the steamboats lands I worked along under the trees and brush till I got to a good place, and then I clumb up into the forks of a cottonwood that was out of reach, and watched. There was a wood-rank four foot high a little ways in front of the tree, and first I was going to hide behind that; but maybe it was luckier I didn't.

There was four or five men cavorting around on their horses in the open place before the log store, cussing and yelling, and trying to get at a couple of young chaps that was behind the wood-rank alongside of the steamboat-landing; but they couldn't come it. Every time one of them showed himself on the river side of the woodpile he got shot at. The two boys was squatting back to back behind the pile, so they could watch both ways.

By and by the men stopped cavorting around and yelling. They started riding towards the store; then up gets one of the boys, draws a steady bead over

the wood-rank, and drops one of them out of his saddle. All the men jumped off of their horses and grabbed the hurt one and started to carry him to the store; and that minute the two boys started on the run. They got half-way to the tree I was in before the men noticed. Then the men see them, and jumped on their horses and took out after them. They gained on the boys, but it didn't do no good, the boys had too good a start; they got to the woodpile that was in front of my tree, and slipped in behind it, and so they had the bulge on the men again. One of the boys was Buck, and the other was a slim young chap about nineteen years old.

The men ripped around awhile, and then rode away. As soon as they was out of sight I sung out to Buck and told him. He didn't know what to make of my voice coming out of the tree at first. He was awful surprised. He told me to watch out sharp and let him know when the men come in sight again; said they was up to some devilment or other — wouldn't be gone long. I wished I was out of that tree, but I dasn't come down. Buck begun to cry and rip, and 'lowed that him and his cousin Joe (that was the other young chap) would make up for this day yet. He said his father and his two brothers was killed, and two or three of the enemy. Said the Shepherdsons laid for them in ambush. Buck said his father and brothers ought to waited for their relations — the Shepherdsons was too strong for them. I asked him what was become of young Harney and Miss Sophia. He said they'd got across the river and was safe. I was glad of that; but the way Buck did take on because he didn't manage to kill Harney that day he shot at him — I hain't ever heard anything like it.

All of a sudden, bang! bang! bang! goes three or four guns — the men had slipped around through the woods and come in from behind without their horses! The boys jumped for the river — both of them hurt — and as they swum down the current the men run along the bank shooting at them and singing out, "Kill them, kill them!" It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't a-going to tell *all* that happened — it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them — lots of times I dream about them.

I stayed in the tree till it begun to get dark, afraid to come down. Sometimes I heard guns away off in the woods; and twice I seen little gangs of men gallop past the log store with guns; so I reckoned the trouble was still a-going on. I was mighty downhearted; so I made up my mind I wouldn't ever go anear that house again, because I reckoned I was to blame, somehow. I judged that that piece of paper meant that Miss Sophia was to meet Harney somewheres at half past two and run off; and I judged I ought to told her father about that paper and the curious way she acted, and then maybe he would 'a' locked her up, and this awful mess wouldn't ever happened.

When I got down out of the tree I crept along down the river-bank a piece, and found the two bodies laying in the edge of the water, and tugged at

them till I got them ashore; then I covered up their faces, and got away as quick as I could. I cried a little when I was covering up Buck's face, for he was mighty good to me.

It was just dark now. I never went near the house, but struck through the woods and made for the swamp. Jim warn't on his island, so I tramped off in a hurry for the crick, and crowded through the willows, red-hot to jump aboard and get out of that awful country. The raft was gone! My souls, but I was scared! I couldn't get my breath for most a minute. Then I raised a yell. A voice not twenty-five foot from me says:

"Good lan'! is dat you, honey? Doan' make no noise."

It was Jim's voice — nothing ever sounded so good before. I run along the bank a piece and got aboard, and Jim he grabbed me and hugged me, he was so glad to see me. He says:

"Laws bless you, chile, I 'uz right down sho' you's dead ag'in. Jack's been heah; he say he reck'n you's ben shot, kase you didn' come home no mo'; so I's jes' dis minute a-startin' de raf' down towards de mouf er de crick, so's to be all ready for to shove out en leave soon as Jack comes ag'in en tells me for certain you *is* dead. Lawsy, I's mighty glad to git you back ag'in, honey."

I says:

"All right — that's mighty good; they won't find me, and they'll think I've been killed, and floated down the river — there's something up there that'll help them think so — so don't you lose no time, Jim, but just shove off for the big water as fast as ever you can."

I never felt easy till the raft was two mile below there and out in the middle of the Mississippi. Then we hung up our signal lantern, and judged that we was free and safe once more. I hadn't had a bite to eat since yesterday, so Jim he got out some corn-dodgers and buttermilk, and pork and cabbage and greens — there ain't nothing in the world so good when it's cooked right — and whilst I eat my supper we talked and had a good time. I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What town are Huck and Jim looking for? Why? What state is it in?
2. What bothers Huck's conscience? How does he quiet it?
3. What was the work of the rattlesnake skin?
4. Identify George Jackson; Emmeline Grangerford; old Baldy; Jack.
5. In what two places were the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons likely to meet?
6. Why did Harney ride away for his hat?

7. What happened to Colonel Grangerford? Why does Huck blame himself for it?
8. Characterize Buck. What happened to him?
9. Name two institutions satirized in this section of the novel. Give illustrations.
10. Find several passages depicting nineteenth-century life on the river.

Henry James

Daisy Miller

*Henry James, American novelist who did most of his writing in England, is best known for his "international" novel contrasting American and European character. Roderick Hudson (1875), The American (1877), The Ambassadors (1903), and, most popular of all, Daisy Miller (1879), illustrate this theme. Daisy Miller is "the American girl, whose radical innocence is shown to triumph over the evil-mindedness of the old world as well as over her own rash conduct and indifferent manners." James is also the author of outstanding short stories, such as the ghost-story "The Turn of the Screw," and "Four Meetings." In 1915, because of sympathy with the Allied cause in World War I, he became a naturalized British citizen.*

## CHAPTER I

### *Les Trois Couronnes*

At the little town of Vevay, in Switzerland, there is a particularly comfortable hotel. There are, indeed, many hotels; for the entertainment of tourists is the business of the place, which, as many travellers will remember, is seated upon the edge of a remarkably blue lake — a lake that it behooves every tourist to visit. The shore of the lake presents an unbroken array of establishments of this order, of every category, from the "grand hotel" of the newest fashion, with a chalk-white front, a hundred balconies, and a dozen flags flying from its roof, to the little Swiss *pension* of an elder day, with its name inscribed in German-looking lettering upon a pink or yellow wall, and an awkward summer-house in the angle of the garden. One of the hotels at Vevay, however, is famous, even classical, being distinguished from any of its upstart neighbors by an air both of luxury and of maturity. In this region, in the month of June, American travellers are extremely numerous; it may be said, indeed, that Vevay assumes at this period some of the characteristics of an American watering-place. There

are sights and sounds which evoke a vision, an echo, of Newport and Saratoga. There is a flitting hither and thither of "stylish" young girls, a rustling of muslin flounces, a rattle of dance-music in the morning hours, a sound of high-pitched voices at all times. You receive an impression of these things at the excellent inn of the Trois Couronnes, and are transported in fancy to the Ocean House or to Congress Hall. But at the Trois Couronnes, it must be added, there are other features that are much at variance with these suggestions: neat German waiters, who look like secretaries of legation, Russian princesses sitting in the garden; little Polish boys walking about, held by the hand, with their governors; a view of the sunny crest of the Dent du Midi and the picturesque towers of the Castle of Chillon.

I hardly know whether it was the analogies or the differences that were uppermost in the mind of a young American, who, two or three years ago, sat in the garden of the Trois Couronnes, looking about him, rather idly, at some of the graceful objects I have mentioned. It was a beautiful summer morning, and in whatever fashion the young American looked at things they must have seemed to him charming. He had come from Geneva the day before by the little steamer to see his aunt, who was staying at the hotel — Geneva having been for a long time his place of residence. But his aunt had a headache — his aunt had almost always a headache — and now she was shut up in her room, smelling camphor, so that he was at liberty to wander about. He was some seven-and-twenty years of age. When his friends spoke of him, they usually said that he "was at Geneva studying"; when his enemies spoke of him, they said — but, after all, he had no enemies; he was an extremely amiable fellow, and universally liked. What I should say is, simply, that when certain persons spoke of him they affirmed that the reason of his spending so much time at Geneva was that he was extremely devoted to a lady who lived there — a foreign lady — a person older than himself. Very few Americans — indeed, I think none — had ever seen this lady, about whom there were some singular stories. But Winterbourne had an old attachment for the little metropolis of Calvinism; he had been put to school there as a boy, and he had afterwards gone to college there — circumstances which had led to his forming a great many youthful friendships. Many of these he had kept, and they were a source of great satisfaction to him.

After knocking at his aunt's door, and learning that she was indisposed, he had taken a walk about the town, and then he had come in to his breakfast. He had now finished his breakfast; but he was drinking a small cup of coffee, which had been served to him on a little table in the garden by one of the waiters who looked like an attaché. At last he finished his coffee and lit a cigarette. Presently a small boy came walking along the path — an urchin of nine or ten. The child, who was diminutive for his years, had an aged expression of countenance: pale complexion, and sharp little features. He was dressed in knickerbockers.



with red stockings, which displayed his poor little spindle-shanks; he also wore a brilliant red cravat. He carried in his hand a long alpenstock, the sharp point of which he thrust into everything that he approached — the flower-beds, the garden-benches, the trains of the ladies' dresses. In front of Winterbourne he paused, looking at him with a pair of bright, penetrating little eyes.

"Will you give me a lump of sugar?" he asked, in a sharp, hard little voice — a voice immature, and yet, somehow, not young.

Winterbourne glanced at the small table near him, on which his coffee-service rested, and saw that several morsels of sugar remained. "Yes, you may take one," he answered; "but I don't think sugar is good for little boys."

This little boy stepped forward and carefully selected three of the coveted fragments, two of which he buried in the pocket of his knickerbockers, depositing the other as promptly in another place. He poked his alpenstock, lance-fashion, into Winterbourne's bench, and tried to crack the lump of sugar with his teeth.

"Oh, blazes; it's har-r-d!" he exclaimed, pronouncing the adjective in a peculiar manner.

Winterbourne had immediately perceived that he might have the honor of claiming him as a fellow-countryman. "Take care you don't hurt your teeth," he said, paternally.

"I haven't got any teeth to hurt. They have all come out. I have only got seven teeth. My mother counted them last night, and one came out right afterwards. She said she'd slap me if any more came out. I can't help it. It's this old Europe. It's the climate that makes them come out. In America they didn't come out. It's these hotels."

Winterbourne was much amused. "If you eat three lumps of sugar, your mother will certainly slap you," he said.

"She's got to give me some candy, then," rejoined his young interlocutor. "I can't get any candy here — any American candy. American candy's the best candy."

"And are American little boys the best little boys?" asked Winterbourne.

"I don't know. I'm an American boy," said the child.

"I see you are one of the best!" laughed Winterbourne.

"Are you an American man?" pursued this vivacious infant. And then, on Winterbourne's affirmative reply — "American men are the best!" he declared.

His companion thanked him for the compliment; and the child, who had now got astride his alpenstock, stood looking about him, while he attacked a second lump of sugar. Winterbourne wondered if he himself had been like this in his infancy, for he had been brought to Europe at about this age.

"Here comes my sister!" cried the child, in a moment. "She's an American girl."

Winterbourne looked along the path and saw a beautiful young lady ad-

vancing. "American girls are the best girls!" he said, cheerfully, to his young companion.

"My sister ain't the best!" the child declared. "She's always blowing at me."

"I imagine that is your fault, not hers," said Winterbourne. The young lady meanwhile had drawn near. She was dressed in white muslin, with a hundred frills and flounces, and knots of pale-colored ribbon. She was bareheaded; but she balanced in her hand a large parasol, with a deep border of embroidery; and she was strikingly, admirably pretty. "How pretty they are!" thought Winterbourne, straightening himself in his seat, as if he were prepared to rise.

The young lady paused in front of his bench, near the parapet of the garden, which overlooked the lake. The little boy had now converted his alpenstock into a vaulting-pole, by the aid of which he was springing about in the gravel, and kicking it up a little.

"Randolph," said the young lady, "what *are* you doing?"

"I'm going up the Alps," replied Randolph. "This is the way!" And he gave another little jump, scattering the pebbles about Winterbourne's ears.

"That's the way they come down," said Winterbourne.

"He's an American man!" cried Randolph, in his hard little voice.

The young lady gave no heed to this announcement, but looked straight at her brother. "Well, I guess you had better be quiet," she simply observed.

It seemed to Winterbourne that he had been in a manner presented. He got up and stepped slowly towards the young girl, throwing away his cigarette. "This little boy and I have made acquaintance," he said, with great civility. In Geneva, as he had been perfectly aware, a young man was not at liberty to speak to a young unmarried lady except under certain rarely occurring conditions; but here at Vevay, what conditions could be better than these? — a pretty American girl coming and standing in front of you in a garden. This pretty American girl, however, on hearing Winterbourne's observation, simply glanced at him; she then turned her head and looked over the parapet, at the lake and the opposite mountains. He wondered whether he had gone too far; but he decided that he must advance farther, rather than retreat. While he was thinking of something else to say, the young lady turned to the little boy again.

"I should like to know where you got that pole?" she said.

"I bought it," responded Randolph.

"You don't mean to say you're going to take it to Italy?"

"Yes, I am going to take it to Italy," the child declared.

The young girl glanced over the front of her dress, and smoothed out a knot or two of ribbon. Then she rested her eyes upon the prospect again. "Well, I guess you had better leave it somewhere," she said, after a moment.

"Are you going to Italy?" Winterbourne inquired, in a tone of great respect.

The young lady glanced at him again. "Yes, sir," she replied. And she said nothing more.

"Are you — a — going over the Simplon?" Winterbourne pursued, a little embarrassed.

"I don't know," she said. "I suppose it's some mountain. Randolph, what mountain are we going over?"

"Going where?" the child demanded.

"To Italy," Winterbourne explained.

"I don't know," said Randolph. "I don't want to go to Italy. I want to go to America."

"Oh, Italy is a beautiful place!" rejoined the young man.

"Can you get candy there?" Randolph loudly inquired.

"I hope not," said his sister. "I guess you have had enough candy, and mother thinks so, too."

"I haven't had any for ever so long — for a hundred weeks!" cried the boy, still jumping about.

The young lady inspected her flounces and smoothed her ribbons again, and Winterbourne presently risked an observation upon the beauty of the view. He was ceasing to be embarrassed, for he had begun to perceive that she was not in the least embarrassed herself. There had not been the slightest alteration in her charming complexion: she was evidently neither offended nor fluttered. If she looked another way when he spoke to her, and seemed not particularly to hear him, this was simply her habit, her manner. Yet, as he talked a little more, and pointed out some of the objects of interest in the view, with which she appeared quite unacquainted, she gradually gave him more of the benefit of her glance; and then he saw that this glance was perfectly direct and unshrinking. It was not, however, what would have been called an immodest glance, for the young girl's eyes were singularly honest and fresh. They were wonderfully pretty eyes; and, indeed, Winterbourne had not seen for a long time anything prettier than his fair countrywoman's various features — her complexion, her nose, her ears, her teeth. He had a great relish for feminine beauty; he was addicted to observing and analyzing it; and as regards this young lady's face he made several observations. It was not at all insipid, but it was not exactly expressive; and though it was eminently delicate, Winterbourne mentally accused it — very forgivingly — of a want of finish. He thought it very possible that Master Randolph's sister was a coquette; he was sure she had a spirit of her own; but in her bright, sweet, superficial little visage there was no mockery, no irony. Before long it became obvious that she was much disposed towards conversation. She told him that they were going to Rome for the winter — she and her mother and Randolph. She asked him if he was a "real American"; she shouldn't have taken him for one; he seemed more like a German — this was said after a little hesitation — especially when he spoke. Winterbourne, laughing, answered that he had met Germans who spoke like Americans; but that he had not, so far as he remembered, met an American who spoke like a

German. Then he asked her if she should not be more comfortable in sitting upon the bench which he had just quitted. She answered that she liked standing up and walking about; but she presently sat down. She told him she was from New York State — “if you know where that is.” Winterbourne learned more about her by catching hold of her small, slippery brother, and making him stand a few minutes by his side.

“Tell me your name, my boy,” he said.

“Randolph C. Miller,” said the boy, sharply. “And I’ll tell you her name”; and he levelled his alpenstock at his sister.

“You had better wait till you are asked!” said this young lady, calmly.

“I should like very much to know your name,” said Winterbourne.

“Her name is Daisy Miller!” cried the child. “But that isn’t her real name; that isn’t her name on her cards.”

“It’s a pity you haven’t got one of my cards!” said Miss Miller.

“Her real name is Annie P. Miller,” the boy went on.

“Ask him *his* name,” said his sister, indicating Winterbourne.

But on this point Randolph seemed perfectly indifferent; he continued to supply information with regard to his own family. “My father’s name is Ezra B. Miller,” he announced. “My father ain’t in Europe; my father’s in a better place than Europe.”

Winterbourne imagined for a moment that this was the manner in which the child had been taught to intimate that Mr. Miller had been removed to the sphere of celestial rewards. But Randolph immediately added, “My father’s in Schenectady. He’s got a big business. My father’s rich, you bet!”

“Well!” ejaculated Miss Miller, lowering her parasol and looking at the embroidered border. Winterbourne presently released the child, who departed, dragging his alpenstock along the path. “He doesn’t like Europe,” said the young girl. “He wants to go back.”

“To Schenectady, you mean?”

“Yes; he wants to go right home. He hasn’t got any boys here. There is one boy here, but he always goes round with a teacher; they won’t let him play.”

“And your brother hasn’t any teacher?” Winterbourne inquired.

“Mother thought of getting him one to travel round with us. There was a lady told her of a very good teacher; an American lady — perhaps you know her — Mrs. Sanders. I think she came from Boston. She told her of this teacher, and we thought of getting him to travel round with us. But Randolph said he didn’t want a teacher travelling round with us. He said he wouldn’t have lessons when he was in the cars. And we *are* in the cars about half the time. There was an English lady we met in the cars — I think her name was Miss Featherstone; perhaps you know her. She wanted to know why I didn’t give Randolph lessons — give him ‘instructions,’ she called it. I guess he could give me more instruction than I could give him. He’s very smart.”

"Yes," said Winterbourne; "he seems very smart."

"Mother's going to get a teacher for him as soon as we get to Italy. Can you get good teachers in Italy?"

"Very good, I should think," said Winterbourne.

"Or else she's going to find some school. He ought to learn some more. He's only nine. He's going to college." And in this way Miss Miller continued to converse upon the affairs of her family, and upon other topics. She sat there with her extremely pretty hands, ornamented with very brilliant rings, folded in her lap, and with her pretty eyes now resting upon those of Winterbourne, now wandering over the garden, the people who passed by, and the beautiful view. She talked to Winterbourne as if she had known him a long time. He found it very pleasant. It was many years since he had heard a young girl talk so much. It might have been said of this unknown young lady, who had come and sat down beside him upon a bench, that she chattered. She was very quiet; she sat in a charming, tranquil attitude, but her lips and her eyes were constantly moving. She had a soft, slender, agreeable voice, and her tone was decidedly sociable. She gave Winterbourne a history of her movements and intentions, and those of her mother and brother, in Europe, and enumerated, in particular, the various hotels at which they had stopped. "That English lady in the cars," she said — "Miss Featherstone — asked me if we didn't all live in hotels in America. I told her I had never been in so many hotels in my life as since I came to Europe. I have never seen so many — it's nothing but hotels." But Miss Miller did not make this remark with a querulous accent; she appeared to be in the best humor with everything. She declared that the hotels were very good, when once you got used to their ways, and that Europe was perfectly sweet. She was not disappointed — not a bit. Perhaps it was because she had heard so much about it before. She had ever so many intimate friends that had been there ever so many times. And then she had ever so many dresses and things from Paris. Whenever she put on a Paris dress she felt as if she were in Europe.

"It was a kind of a wishing-cap," said Winterbourne.

"Yes," said Miss Miller, without examining this analogy; "it always made me wish I was here. But I needn't have done that for dresses. I am sure they send all the pretty ones to America; you see the most frightful things here. The only thing I don't like," she proceeded, "is the society. There isn't any society; or, if there is, I don't know where it keeps itself. Do you? I suppose there is some society somewhere, but I haven't seen anything of it. I'm very fond of society, and I have always had a great deal of it. I don't mean only in Schenectady, but in New York. I used to go to New York every winter. In New York I had lots of society. Last winter I had seventeen dinners given me; and three of them were by gentlemen," added Daisy Miller. "I have more friends in New York than in Schenectady — more gentlemen friends; and more young lady friends, too," she resumed in a moment. She paused again for an instant; she was looking at

Winterbourne with all her prettiness in her lively eyes, and in her light, slightly monotonous smile. "I have always had," she said, "a great deal of gentlemen's society."

Poor Winterbourne was amused, perplexed, and decidedly charmed. He had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion — never, at least, save in cases where to say such things seemed a kind of demonstrative evidence of a certain laxity of deportment. And yet was he to accuse Miss Daisy Miller of actual or potential *inconduite*, as they said at Geneva? He felt that he had lived at Geneva so long that he had lost a good deal; he had become dis-habituated to the American tone. Never, indeed, since he had grown old enough to appreciate things had he encountered a young American girl of so pronounced a type as this. Certainly she was very charming, but how deucedly sociable! Was she simply a pretty girl from New York State? Were they all like that, the pretty girls who had a good deal of gentlemen's society? Or was she also a designing, an audacious, an unscrupulous young person? Winterbourne had lost his instinct in this matter, and his reason could not help him. Miss Daisy Miller looked extremely innocent. Some people had told him that, after all, American girls were exceedingly innocent; and others had told him that, after all, they were not. He was inclined to think Miss Daisy Miller was a flirt — a pretty American flirt. He had never, as yet, had any relations with young ladies of this category. He had known, here in Europe, two or three women — persons older than Miss Daisy Miller, and provided, for respectability's sake, with husbands — who were great coquettes — dangerous, terrible women, with whom one's relations were liable to take a serious turn. But this young girl was not a coquette in that sense; she was very unsophisticated; she was only a pretty American flirt. Winterbourne was almost grateful for having found the formula that applied to Miss Daisy Miller. He leaned back in his seat; he remarked to himself that she had the most charming nose he had ever seen; he wondered what were the regular conditions and limitations of one's intercourse with a pretty American flirt. It presently became apparent that he was on the way to learn.

"Have you been to that old castle?" asked the young girl, pointing with her parasol to the far-gleaming walls of the Château de Chillon.

"Yes, formerly, more than once," said Winterbourne. "You, too, I suppose, have seen it?"

"No; we haven't been there. I want to go there dreadfully. Of course I mean to go there. I wouldn't go away from here without having seen that old castle."

"It's a very pretty excursion," said Winterbourne, "and very easy to make. You can drive or go by the little steamer."

"You can go in the cars," said Miss Miller.

"Yes; you can go in the cars," Winterbourne assented.

"Our courier says they take you right up to the castle," the young girl con-

tinued. "We were going last week; but my mother gave out. She suffers dreadfully from dyspepsia. She said she couldn't go. Randolph wouldn't go, either; he says he doesn't think much of old castles. But I guess we'll go this week, if we can get Randolph."

"Your brother is not interested in ancient monuments?" Winterbourne inquired, smiling.

"He says he don't care much about old castles. He's only nine. He wants to stay at the hotel. Mother's afraid to leave him alone, and the courier won't stay with him; so we haven't been to many places. But it will be too bad if we don't go up there." And Miss Miller pointed again at the Château de Chillon.

"I should think it might be arranged," said Winterbourne. "Couldn't you get some one to stay for the afternoon with Randolph?"

Miss Miller looked at him a moment, and then very placidly, "I wish *you* would stay with him!" she said.

Winterbourne hesitated a moment. "I should much rather go to Chillon with you."

"With me?" asked the young girl, with the same placidity.

She didn't rise, blushing, as a young girl at Geneva would have done; and yet Winterbourne, conscious that he had been very bold, thought it possible that she was offended. "With your mother," he answered, very respectfully.

But it seemed that both his audacity and his respect were lost upon Miss Daisy Miller. "I guess my mother won't go, after all," she said. "She don't like to ride round in the afternoon. But did you really mean what you said just now, that you would like to go up there?"

"Most earnestly," Winterbourne declared.

"Then we may arrange it. If mother will stay with Randolph, I guess Eugenio will."

"Eugenio?" the young man inquired.

"Eugenio's our courier. He doesn't like to stay with Randolph; he's the most fastidious man I ever saw. But he's a splendid courier. I guess he'll stay at home with Randolph if mother does, and then we can go to the castle."

Winterbourne reflected for an instant as lucidly as possible — "we" could only mean Miss Daisy Miller and himself. This programme seemed almost too agreeable for credence; he felt as if he ought to kiss the young lady's hand. Possibly he would have done so, and quite spoiled the project; but at this moment another person, presumably Eugenio, appeared. A tall, handsome man, with superb whiskers, wearing a velvet morning-coat and a brilliant watch-chain, approached Miss Miller, looking sharply at her companion. "Oh, Eugenio!" said Miss Miller, with the friendliest accent.

Eugenio had looked at Winterbourne from head to foot; he now bowed gravely to the young lady. "I have the honor to inform mademoiselle that luncheon is upon the table."

Miss Miller slowly rose. "See here, Eugenio!" she said; "I'm going to that old castle, anyway."

"To the Château de Chillon, mademoiselle?" the courier inquired. "Mademoiselle has made arrangements?" he added, in a tone which struck Winterbourne as very impertinent.

Eugenio's tone apparently threw, even to Miss Miller's own apprehension, a slightly ironical light upon the young girl's situation. She turned to Winterbourne, blushing a little — a very little. "You won't back out?" she said.

"I shall not be happy till we go!" he protested.

"And you are staying in this hotel?" she went on. "And you are really an American?"

The courier stood looking at Winterbourne offensively. The young man, at least, thought his manner of looking an offence to Miss Miller; it conveyed an imputation that she "picked up" acquaintances. "I shall have the honor of presenting to you a person who will tell you all about me," he said, smiling, and referring to his aunt.

"Oh, well, we'll go some day," said Miss Miller. And she gave him a smile and turned away. She put up her parasol and walked back to the inn beside Eugenio. Winterbourne stood looking after her; and as she moved away, drawing her muslin furbelows over the gravel, said to himself that she had the *tournure* of a princess.

He had, however, engaged to do more than proved feasible, in promising to present his aunt, Mrs. Costello, to Miss Daisy Miller. As soon as the former lady had got better of her headache he waited upon her in her apartment; and, after the proper inquiries in regard to her health, he asked her if she had observed in the hotel an American family — a mamma, a daughter, and a little boy.

"And a courier?" said Mrs. Costello. "Oh yes, I have observed them. Seen them — heard them — and kept out of their way." Mrs. Costello was a widow with a fortune; a person of much distinction, who frequently intimated that, if she were not so dreadfully liable to sick-headaches, she would probably have left a deeper impress upon her time. She had a long, pale face, a high nose, and a great deal of very striking white hair, which she wore in large puffs and *rouleaux* over the top of her head. She had two sons married in New York, and another who was now in Europe. This young man was amusing himself at Hombourg; and, though he was on his travels, was rarely perceived to visit any particular city at the moment selected by his mother for her own appearance there. Her nephew, who had come up to Vevay expressly to see her, was therefore more attentive than those who, as she said, were nearer to her. He had imbibed at Geneva the idea that one must always be attentive to one's aunt. Mrs. Costello had not seen him for many years, and she was greatly pleased with him, manifesting her approbation by initiating him into many of the secrets of that social sway which, as she gave him to understand, she exerted in



the American capital. She admitted that she was very exclusive; but, if he were acquainted with New York, he would see that one had to be. And her picture of the minutely hierarchical constitution of the society of that city, which she presented to him in many different lights, was, to Winterbourne's imagination, almost oppressively striking.

He immediately perceived, from her tone, that Miss Daisy Miller's place in the social scale was low. "I am afraid you don't approve of them," he said.

"They are very common," Mrs. Costello declared. "They are the sort of Americans that one does one's duty by not — not accepting."

"Ah, you don't accept them?" said the young man.

"I can't, my dear Frederick. I would if I could, but I can't."

"The young girl is very pretty," said Winterbourne, in a moment.

"Of course she's pretty. But she is very common."

"I see what you mean, of course," said Winterbourne, after another pause.

"She has that charming look that they all have," his aunt resumed. "I can't think where they pick it up; and she dresses in perfection — no, you don't know how well she dresses. I can't think where they get their taste."

"But, my dear aunt, she is not, after all, a Comanche savage."

"She is a young lady," said Mrs. Costello, "who has an intimacy with her mamma's courier."

"An intimacy with the courier?" the young man demanded.

"Oh, the mother is just as bad! They treat the courier like a familiar friend — like a gentleman. I shouldn't wonder if he dines with them. Very likely they have never seen a man with such good manners, such fine clothes, so like a gentleman. He probably corresponds to the young lady's idea of a count. He sits with them in the garden in the evening. I think he smokes."

Winterbourne listened with interest to these disclosures; they helped him to make up his mind about Miss Daisy. Evidently she was rather wild.

"Well," he said, "I am not a courier, and yet she was very charming to me."

"You had better have said at first," said Mrs. Costello, with dignity, "that you had made her acquaintance."

"We simply met in the garden, and we talked a bit."

"*Tout bonnement!* And pray what did you say?"

"I said I should take the liberty of introducing her to my admirable aunt."

"I am much obliged to you."

"It was to guarantee my respectability," said Winterbourne.

"And pray who is to guarantee hers?"

"Ah, you are cruel," said the young man. "She's a very nice young girl."

"You don't say that as if you believed it," Mrs. Costello observed.

"She is completely uncultivated," Winterbourne went on. "But she is wonderfully pretty, and, in short, she is very nice. To prove that I believe it, I am going to take her to the Château de Chillon."

"You two are going off there together? I should say it proved just the contrary. How long had you known her, may I ask, when this interesting project was formed? You haven't been twenty-four hours in the house."

"I had known her half an hour!" said Winterbourne, smiling.

"Dear me!" cried Mrs. Costello. "What a dreadful girl!"

Her nephew was silent for some moments. "You really think, then," he began, earnestly, and with a desire for trustworthy information — "you really think that —" But he paused again.

"Think what, sir?" said his aunt.

"That she is the sort of young lady who expects a man, sooner or later, to carry her off?"

"I haven't the least idea what such young ladies expect a man to do. But I really think that you had better not meddle with little American girls that are uncultivated, as you call them. You have lived too long out of the country. You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent."

"My dear aunt, I am not so innocent," said Winterbourne, smiling and curling his mustache.

"You are too guilty, then!"

Winterbourne continued to curl his mustache, meditatively. "You won't let the poor girl know you, then?" he asked at last.

"Is it literally true that she is going to the Château de Chillon with you?"

"I think that she fully intends it."

"Then, my dear Frederick," said Mrs. Costello, "I must decline the honor of her acquaintance. I am an old woman, but I am not too old, thank Heaven, to be shocked!"

"But don't they all do these things — the young girls in America?" Winterbourne inquired.

Mrs. Costello stared a moment. "I should like to see my granddaughters do them!" she declared, grimly.

This seemed to throw some light upon the matter, for Winterbourne remembered to have heard that his pretty cousins in New York were "tremendous flirts." If, therefore, Miss Daisy Miller exceeded the liberal margin allowed to these young ladies, it was probable that anything might be expected of her. Winterbourne was impatient to see her again, and he was vexed with himself that, by instinct, he should not appreciate her justly.

Though he was impatient to see her, he hardly knew what he should say to her about his aunt's refusal to become acquainted with her; but he discovered, promptly enough, that with Miss Daisy Miller there was no great need of walking on tiptoe. He found her that evening in the garden, wandering about in the warm starlight like an indolent sylph, and swinging to and fro the largest fan he had ever beheld. It was ten o'clock. He had just dined with his aunt, had been sitting with her since dinner, and had just taken leave of her till the morrow.

Miss Daisy Miller seemed very glad to see him; she declared it was the longest evening she had ever passed.

"Have you been all alone?" he asked.

"I have been walking round with mother. But mother gets tired walking round," she answered.

"Has she gone to bed?"

"No; she doesn't like to go to bed," said the young girl. "She doesn't sleep — not three hours. She says she doesn't know how she lives. She's dreadfully nervous. I guess she sleeps more than she thinks. She's gone somewhere after Randolph; she wants to try to get him to go to bed. He doesn't like to go to bed."

"Let us hope she will persuade him," observed Winterbourne.

"She will talk to him all she can; but he doesn't like her to talk to him," said Miss Daisy, opening her fan. "She's going to try to get Eugenio to talk to him. But he isn't afraid of Eugenio. Eugenio's a splendid courier, but he can't make much impression on Randolph! I don't believe he'll go to bed before eleven." It appeared that Randolph's vigil was in fact triumphantly prolonged, for Winterbourne strolled about with the young girl for some time without meeting her mother. "I have been looking round for that lady you want to introduce me to," his companion resumed. "She's your aunt." Then, on Winterbourne's admitting the fact, and expressing some curiosity as to how she had learned it, she said she had heard all about Mrs. Costello from the chambermaid. She was very quiet, and very *comme il faut*; she wore white puffs; she spoke to no one, and she never dined at the *table d'hôte*. Every two days she had a headache. "I think that's a lovely description, headache and all!" said Miss Daisy, chattering along in her thin, gay voice. "I want to know her ever so much. I know just what *your* aunt would be; I know I should like her. She would be very exclusive. I like a lady to be exclusive; I'm dying to be exclusive myself. Well, we *are* exclusive, mother and I. We don't speak to every one — or they don't speak to us. I suppose it's about the same thing. Anyway, I shall be ever so glad to know your aunt."

Winterbourne was embarrassed. "She would be most happy," he said; "but I am afraid those headaches will interfere."

The young girl looked at him through the dusk. "But I suppose she doesn't have a headache every day," she said, sympathetically.

Winterbourne was silent a moment. "She tells me she does," he answered at last, not knowing what to say.

Miss Daisy Miller stopped, and stood looking at him. Her prettiness was still visible in the darkness; she was opening and closing her enormous fan. "She doesn't want to know me!" she said, suddenly. "Why don't you say so? You needn't be afraid. I'm not afraid!" And she gave a little laugh.

Winterbourne fancied there was a tremor in her voice; he was touched,

shocked, mortified by it. "My dear young lady," he protested, "she knows no one. It's her wretched health."

The young girl walked on a few steps, laughing still. "You needn't be afraid," she repeated. "Why should she want to know me?" Then she paused again; she was close to the parapet of the garden, and in front of her was the starlit lake. There was a vague sheen upon its surface, and in the distance were dimly-seen mountain forms. Daisy Miller looked out upon the mysterious prospect, and then she gave another little laugh. "Gracious! she *is* exclusive!" she said. Winterbourne wondered whether she was seriously wounded, and for a moment almost wished that her sense of injury might be such as to make it becoming in him to attempt to reassure and comfort her. He had a pleasant sense that she would be very approachable for consolatory purposes. He felt then, for the instant, quite ready to sacrifice his aunt, conversationally; to admit that she was a proud, rude woman, and to declare that they needn't mind her. But before he had time to commit himself to this perilous mixture of gallantry and impiety, the young lady, resuming her walk, gave an exclamation in quite another tone. "Well, here's mother! I guess she hasn't got Randolph to go to bed." The figure of a lady appeared, at a distance, very indistinct in the darkness, and advancing with a slow and wavering movement. Suddenly it seemed to pause.

"Are you sure it is your mother? Can you distinguish her in this thick dusk?" Winterbourne asked.

"Well!" cried Miss Daisy Miller, with a laugh; "I guess I know my own mother. And when she has got on my shawl, too! She is always wearing my things."

The lady in question, ceasing to advance, hovered vaguely about the spot at which she had checked her steps.

"I am afraid your mother doesn't see you," said Winterbourne. "Or perhaps," he added, thinking, with Miss Miller, the joke permissible — "perhaps she feels guilty about your shawl."

"Oh, it's a fearful old thing!" the young girl replied, serenely. "I told her she could wear it. She won't come here, because she sees you."

"Ah, then," said Winterbourne, "I had better leave you."

"Oh, no; come on!" urged Miss Daisy Miller.

"I'm afraid your mother doesn't approve of my walking with you."

Miss Miller gave him a serious glance. "It isn't for me; it's for you — that is, it's for *her*. Well, I don't know who it's for! But mother doesn't like any of my gentlemen friends. She's right down timid. She always makes a fuss if I introduce a gentleman. But I *do* introduce them — almost always. If I didn't introduce my gentlemen friends to mother," the young girl added, in her little soft, flat monotone, "I shouldn't think it was natural."

"To introduce me," said Winterbourne, "you must know my name." And he proceeded to pronounce it to her.

"Oh, dear, I can't say all that!" said his companion with a laugh. But by this time they had come up to Mrs. Miller, who, as they drew near, walked to the parapet of the garden and leaned upon it, looking intently at the lake, and turning her back to them. "Mother!" said the young girl, in a tone of decision. Upon this the elder lady turned round. "Mr. Winterbourne," said Miss Daisy Miller, introducing the young man very frankly and prettily. "Common," she was, as Mrs. Costello had pronounced her; yet it was a wonder to Winterbourne that, with her commonness, she had a singularly delicate grace.

Her mother was a small, spare, light person, with a wandering eye, a very exiguous nose, and a large forehead, decorated with a certain amount of thin, much-frizzled hair. Like her daughter, Mrs. Miller was dressed with extreme elegance; she had enormous diamonds in her ears. So far as Winterbourne could observe, she gave him no greeting — she certainly was not looking at him. Daisy was near her, pulling her shawl straight. "What are you doing, poking round here?" this young lady inquired, but by no means with that harshness of accent which her choice of words may imply.

"I don't know," said her mother, turning toward the lake again.

"I shouldn't think you'd want that shawl!" Daisy exclaimed.

"Well, I do!" her mother answered, with a little laugh.

"Did you get Randolph to go to bed?" asked the young girl.

"No; I couldn't induce him," said Mrs. Miller, very gently. "He wants to talk to the waiter. He likes to talk to that waiter."

"I was telling Mr. Winterbourne," the young girl went on; and to the young man's ear her tone might have indicated that she had been uttering his name all her life.

"Oh yes!" said Winterbourne; "I have the pleasure of knowing your son."

Randolph's mamma was silent; she turned her attention to the lake. But at last she spoke. "Well, I don't see how he lives!"

"Anyhow, it isn't so bad as it was at Dover," said Daisy Miller.

"And what occurred at Dover?" Winterbourne asked.

"He wouldn't go to bed at all. I guess he sat up all night in the public parlor. He wasn't in bed at twelve o'clock; I know that."

"It was half-past twelve," declared Mrs. Miller, with mild emphasis.

"Does he sleep much during the day?" Winterbourne demanded.

"I guess he doesn't sleep much," Daisy rejoined.

"I wish he would!" said her mother. "It seems as if he couldn't."

"I think he's real tiresome," Daisy pursued.

Then for some moments there was silence. "Well, Daisy Miller," said the elder lady, presently, "I shouldn't think you'd want to talk against your own brother!"

"Well, he *is* tiresome, mother," said Daisy, quite without the asperity of a retort.

"He's only nine," urged Mrs. Miller.

"Well, he wouldn't go to that castle," said the young girl. "I'm going there with Mr. Winterbourne."

To this announcement, very placidly made, Daisy's mamma offered no response. Winterbourne took for granted that she deeply disapproved of the projected excursion; but he said to himself that she was a simple, easily-managed person, and that a few deferential protestations would take the edge from her displeasure. "Yes," he began; "your daughter has kindly allowed me the honor of being her guide."

Mrs. Miller's wandering eyes attached themselves, with a sort of appealing air, to Daisy, who, however, strolled a few steps farther, gently humming to herself. "I presume you will go in the cars," said her mother.

"Yes, or in the boat," said Winterbourne.

"Well, of course, I don't know," Mrs. Miller rejoined. "I have never been to that castle."

"It is a pity you shouldn't go," said Winterbourne, beginning to feel reassured as to her opposition. And yet he was quite prepared to find that, as a matter of course, she meant to accompany her daughter.

"We've been thinking ever so much about going," she pursued; "but it seems as if we couldn't. Of course Daisy, she wants to go round. But there's a lady here — I don't know her name — she says she shouldn't think we'd want to go to see castles *here*; she should think we'd want to wait till we got to Italy. It seems as if there would be so many there," continued Mrs. Miller, with an air of increasing confidence. "Of course we only want to see the principal ones. We visited several in England," she presently added.

"Ah, yes! in England there are beautiful castles," said Winterbourne. "But Chillon, here, is very well worth seeing."

"Well, if Daisy feels up to it —" said Mrs. Miller, in a tone impregnated with a sense of the magnitude of the enterprise. "It seems as if there was nothing she wouldn't undertake."

"Oh, I think she'll enjoy it!" Winterbourne declared. And he desired more and more to make it a certainty that he was to have the privilege of a tête-à-tête with the young lady, who was still strolling along in front of them, softly vocalizing. "You are not disposed, madam," he inquired, "to undertake it yourself?"

Daisy's mother looked at him an instant askance, and then walked forward in silence. Then — "I guess she had better go alone," she said, simply. Winterbourne observed to himself that this was a very different type of maternity from that of the vigilant matrons who massed themselves in the fore-front of social intercourse in the dark old city at the other end of the lake. But his meditations were interrupted by hearing his name very distinctly pronounced by Mrs. Miller's unprotected daughter.

"Mr. Winterbourne!" murmured Daisy.

"Mademoiselle!" said the young man.

"Don't you want to take me out in a boat?"

"At present?" he asked.

"Of course!" said Daisy.

"Well, Annie Miller!" exclaimed her mother.

"I beg you, madam, to let her go," said Winterbourne, ardently; for he had never yet enjoyed the sensation of guiding through the summer starlight a skiff freighted with a fresh and beautiful young girl.

"I shouldn't think she'd want to," said her mother. "I should think she'd rather go indoors."

"I'm sure Mr. Winterbourne wants to take me," Daisy declared. "He's so awfully devoted!"

"I will row you over to Chillon in the starlight."

"I don't believe it!" said Daisy.

"Well!" ejaculated the elder lady again.

"You haven't spoken to me for half an hour," her daughter went on.

"I have been having some very pleasant conversation with your mother," said Winterbourne.

"Well, I want you to take me out in a boat!" Daisy repeated. They had all stopped, and she had turned round and was looking at Winterbourne. Her face wore a charming smile, her pretty eyes were gleaming, she was swinging her great fan about. No; it's impossible to be prettier than that, thought Winterbourne.

"There are half a dozen boats moored at that landing-place," he said, pointing to certain steps which descended from the garden to the lake. "If you will do me the honor to accept my arm, we will go and select one of them."

Daisy stood there smiling; she threw back her head and gave a little light laugh. "I like a gentleman to be formal!" she declared.

"I assure you it's a formal offer."

"I was bound I would make you say something," Daisy went on.

"You see, it's not very difficult," said Winterbourne. "But I am afraid you are chaffing me."

"I think not, sir," remarked Mrs. Miller, very gently.

"Do, then, let me give you a row," he said to the young girl.

"It's quite lovely, the way you say that!" cried Daisy.

"It will be still more lovely to do it."

"Yes, it would be lovely!" said Daisy. But she made no movement to accompany him; she only stood there laughing.

"I should think you had better find out what time it is," interposed her mother.

"It is eleven o'clock, madam," said a voice, with a foreign accent, out of the

neighboring darkness; and Winterbourne, turning, perceived the florid personage who was in attendance upon the two ladies. He had apparently just approached.

"Oh, Eugenio," said Daisy, "I am going out in a boat!"

Eugenio bowed. "At eleven o'clock, mademoiselle?"

"I am going with Mr. Winterbourne — this very minute."

"Do tell her she can't," said Mrs. Miller to the courier.

"I think you had better not go out in a boat, mademoiselle," Eugenio declared.

Winterbourne wished to Heaven this pretty girl were not so familiar with her courier; but he said nothing.

"I suppose you don't think it's proper!" Daisy exclaimed. "Eugenio doesn't think anything's proper."

"I am at your service," said Winterbourne.

"Does mademoiselle propose to go alone?" asked Eugenio of Mrs. Miller.

"Oh, no; with this gentleman!" answered Daisy's mamma.

The courier looked for a moment at Winterbourne — the latter thought he was smiling — and then, solemnly, with a bow, "As mademoiselle pleases!" he said.

"Oh, I hoped you would make a fuss!" said Daisy. "I don't care to go now."

"I myself shall make a fuss if you don't go," said Winterbourne.

"That's all I want — a little fuss!" And the young girl began to laugh again.

"Mr. Randolph has gone to bed!" the courier announced, frigidly.

"Oh, Daisy; now we can go!" said Mrs. Miller.

Daisy turned away from Winterbourne, looking at him, smiling, and fanning herself. "Good-night," she said; "I hope you are disappointed, or disgusted, or something!"

He looked at her, taking the hand she offered him. "I am puzzled," he answered.

"Well, I hope it won't keep you awake!" she said, very smartly; and, under the escort of the privileged Eugenio, the two ladies passed towards the house.

Winterbourne stood looking after them; he was indeed puzzled. He lingered beside the lake for a quarter of an hour, turning over the mystery of the young girl's sudden familiarities and caprices. But the only very definite conclusion he came to was that he should enjoy deucedly "going off" with her somewhere.

Two days afterwards he went off with her to the Castle of Chillon. He waited for her in the large hall of the hotel, where the couriers, the servants, the foreign tourists, were lounging about and staring. It was not the place he should have chosen, but she had appointed it. She came tripping down-stairs, buttoning her long gloves, squeezing her folded parasol against her pretty figure, dressed in the perfection of a soberly elegant travelling costume. Winterbourne was a man of imagination and, as our ancestors used to say, sensibility; as he



looked at her dress and — on the great staircase — her little rapid, confiding step, he felt as if there were something romantic going forward. He could have believed he was going to elope with her. He passed out with her among all the idle people that assembled there; they were all looking at her very hard; she had begun to chatter as soon as she joined him. Winterbourne's preference had been that they should be conveyed to Chillon in a carriage; but she expressed a lively wish to go in the little steamer; she declared that she had a passion for steamboats. There was always such a lovely breeze upon the water, and you saw such lots of people. The sail was not long, but Winterbourne's companion found time to say a great many things. To the young man himself their little excursion was so much of an escapade — an adventure — that, even allowing for her habitual sense of freedom, he had some expectation of seeing her regard it in the same way. But it must be confessed that, in this particular, he was disappointed. Daisy Miller was extremely animated, she was in charming spirits; but she was apparently not at all excited; she was not fluttered; she avoided neither his eyes nor those of any one else; she blushed neither when she looked at him nor when she felt that people were looking at her. People continued to look at her a great deal, and Winterbourne took much satisfaction in his pretty companion's distinguished air. He had been a little afraid that she would talk loud, laugh overmuch, and even, perhaps, desire to move about the boat a good deal. But he quite forgot his fears; he sat smiling, with his eyes upon her face, while, without moving from her place, she delivered herself of a great number of original reflections. It was the most charming garrulity he had ever heard. He had assented to the idea that she was "common"; but was she so, after all, or was he simply getting used to her commonness? Her conversation was chiefly of what metaphysicians term the objective cast; but every now and then it took a subjective turn.

"What on *earth* are you so grave about?" she suddenly demanded, fixing her agreeable eyes upon Winterbourne's.

"Am I grave?" he asked. "I had an idea I was grinning from ear to ear."

"You look as if you were taking me to a funeral. If that's a grin, your ears are very near together."

"Should you like me to dance a hornpipe on the deck?"

"Pray do, and I'll carry round your hat. It will pay the expenses of our journey."

"I never was better pleased in my life," murmured Winterbourne.

She looked at him a moment, and then burst into a little laugh. "I like to make you say those things! You're a queer mixture!"

In the castle, after they had landed, the subjective element decidedly prevailed. Daisy tripped about the vaulted chambers, rustled her skirts in the corkscrew staircases, flirted back with a pretty little cry and a shudder from the edge of the *oubliettes*, and turned a singularly well-shaped ear to everything that

Winterbourne told her about the place. But he saw that she cared very little for feudal antiquities, and that the dusky traditions of Chillon made but a slight impression upon her. They had the good-fortune to have been able to walk about without other companionship than that of the custodian; and Winterbourne arranged with this functionary — that they should not be hurried — that they should linger and pause wherever they chose. The custodian interpreted the bargain generously — Winterbourne, on his side, had been generous — and ended by leaving them quite to themselves. Miss Miller's observations were not remarkable for logical consistency; for anything she wanted to say she was sure to find a pretext. She found a great many pretexts in the rugged embrasures of Chillon for asking Winterbourne sudden questions about himself — his family, his previous history, his tastes, his habits, his intentions — and for supplying information upon corresponding points in her own personality. Of her own tastes, habits, and intentions Miss Miller was prepared to give the most definite, and, indeed, the most favorable account.

"Well, I hope you know enough!" she said to her companion, after he had told her the history of the unhappy Bonnivard. "I never saw a man that knew so much!" The history of Bonnivard had evidently, as they say, gone into one ear and out of the other. But Daisy went on to say that she wished Winterbourne would travel with them, and "go round" with them; they might know something, in that case. "Don't you want to come and teach Randolph?" she asked. Winterbourne said that nothing could possibly please him so much, but that he had unfortunately other occupations. "Other occupations? I don't believe it!" said Miss Daisy. "What do you mean? You are not in business." The young man admitted that he was not in business; but he had engagements which, even within a day or two, would force him to go back to Geneva. "Oh, bother!" she said; "I don't believe it!" and she began to talk about something else. But a few moments later, when he was pointing out to her the pretty design of an antique fireplace, she broke out irrelevantly, "You don't mean to say you are going back to Geneva?"

"It is a melancholy fact that I shall have to return tomorrow."

"Well, Mr. Winterbourne," said Daisy, "I think you're horrid!"

"Oh, don't say such dreadful things!" said Winterbourne — "just at the last!"

"The last!" cried the young girl; "I call it the first. I have half a mind to leave you here and go straight back to the hotel alone." And for the next ten minutes she did nothing but call him horrid. Poor Winterbourne was fairly bewildered; no young lady had as yet done him the honor to be so agitated by the announcement of his movements. His companion, after this, ceased to pay any attention to the curiosities of Chillon or the beauties of the lake; she opened fire upon the mysterious charmer of Geneva, whom she appeared to have instantly taken it for granted that he was hurrying back to see. How did Miss Daisy Miller know that there was a charmer in Geneva? Winterbourne,

who denied the existence of such a person, was quite unable to discover; and he was divided between amazement at the rapidity of her induction and amusement at the frankness of her *persiflage*. She seemed to him, in all this, an extraordinary mixture of innocence and crudity. "Does she never allow you more than three days at a time?" asked Daisy, ironically. "Doesn't she give you a vacation in summer? There is no one so hard worked but they can get leave to go off somewhere at this season. I suppose, if you stay another day, she'll come after you in the boat. Do wait over till Friday, and I will go down to the landing to see her arrive!" Winterbourne began to think he had been wrong to feel disappointed in the temper in which the young lady had embarked. If he had missed the personal accent, the personal accent was now making its appearance. It sounded very distinctly, at last, in her telling him she would stop "teasing" him if he would promise her solemnly to come down to Rome in the winter.

"That's not a difficult promise to make," said Winterbourne. "My aunt has taken an apartment in Rome for the winter, and has already asked me to come and see her."

"I don't want you to come for your aunt," said Daisy; "I want you to come for me." And this was the only allusion that the young man was ever to hear her make to his invidious kinswoman. He declared that, at any rate, he would certainly come. After this Daisy stopped teasing. Winterbourne took a carriage, and they drove back to Vevay in the dusk. The young girl was very quiet.

In the evening Winterbourne mentioned to Mrs. Costello that he had spent the afternoon at Chillon with Miss Daisy Miller.

"The Americans — of the courier?" asked this lady.

"Ah, happily," said Winterbourne, "the courier stayed at home."

"She went with you all alone?"

"All alone."

Mrs. Costello sniffed a little at her smelling-bottle. "And that," she exclaimed, "is the young person whom you wanted me to know!"

#### QUESTIONS

1. Where is the *Trois Couronnes*? How is it like Newport or Saratoga? How different?
2. In what ways are the Millers typical American tourists?
3. What are Daisy Miller's chief character traits? Finish Winterbourne's sentence about her: "Certainly she was very charming, but how deucedly ———!"
4. Identify Eugenio; Mrs. Costello. What does each think of Daisy Miller?
5. How long does it take Daisy and Winterbourne to make a date? When does she learn his name?
6. What kind of mother is Mrs. Miller? Give illustrations of her relations with Randolph; with Daisy.
7. Who was Bonnivard? Was Daisy more interested in him or in Winterbourne?
8. What is the chief conflict in this novel? Is it physical or psychological?

*Sinclair Lewis, first American to win the Nobel Prize for literature, was an outstanding novelist and satirist of the 1920's. He was educated in his native Sauk Center, Minnesota, and at Yale. After miscellaneous free-lancing and editing, he wrote, in 1920, a novel to please himself: Main Street, which sold half a million copies. He followed this with Babbitt (1922), Arrowsmith (1925), Elmer Gantry (1927), Dodsworth (1929), and other books which represent "a remarkable diary of the middle class mind in America" and depict memorable satirical type characters, like Babbitt, the businessman. Arrowsmith was awarded the 1926 Pulitzer Prize for the novel (which Lewis refused); in 1930 Lewis accepted the Nobel Prize. He died in 1951, in Rome.*

## CHAPTER XIV

All afternoon they drove in the flapping buggy across the long undulations of the prairie. To their wandering there was no barrier, neither lake nor mountain nor factory-bristling city, and the breeze about them was flowing sunshine.

Martin cried to Leora, "I feel as if all the Zenith dust and hospital lint were washed out of my lungs. Dakota. Real man's country. Frontier. Opportunity. America!"

From the thick swale the young prairie chickens rose. As he watched them sweep across the wheat, his sun-drowsed spirit was part of the great land, and he was almost freed of the impatience with which he had started out from Wheatsylvania.

"If you're going driving, don't forget that supper is six o'clock sharp," Mrs. Tozer had said, smiling to sugar-coat it.

On Main Street, Mr. Tozer waved to them and shouted, "Be back by six. Supper at six o'clock sharp."

Bert Tozer ran out from the bank, like a country schoolmaster skipping from a one-room schoolhouse, and cackled, "Say, you folks better not forget to be back at six o'clock for supper or the Old Man'll have a fit. He'll expect you for supper at six o'clock sharp, and when he says six o'clock *sharp*, he means six o'clock *sharp*, and not five minutes *past* six!"

"Now that," observed Leora, "is funny, because in my twenty-two years in Wheatsylvania I remember three different times when supper was as late as seven minutes after six. Let's get out of this, Sandy. . . . I wonder were we so wise to live with the family and save money?"

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Before they had escaped from the not very extensive limits of Wheatsylvania they passed Ada Quist, the future Mrs. Bert Tozer, and through the lazy air they heard her voice slashing: "Better be home by six."

Martin would be heroic. "We'll by golly get back when we're by golly good and ready!" he said to Leora; but on them both was the cumulative dread of the fussing voices, beyond every breezy prospect was the order, "Be back at six sharp"; and they whipped up to arrive at eleven minutes to six, as Mr. Tozer was returning from the creamery, full thirty seconds later than usual.

"Glad to see you among us," he said. "Hustle now and get that horse in the livery stable. Supper's at six — sharp!"

Martin survived it sufficiently to sound domestic when he announced at the supper-table:

"We had a bully drive. I'm going to like it here. Well, I've loafed for a day and a half, and now I've got to get busy. First thing is, I must find a location for my office. What is there vacant, Father Tozer?"

Mrs. Tozer said brightly, "Oh, I have such a nice idea, Martin. Why can't we fix up an office for you out in the barn? It'd be so handy to the house, for you to get to meals on time, and you could keep an eye on the house if the girl was out and Ory and I went out visiting or to the Embroidery Circle."

"In the barn!"

"Why, yes, in the old harness room. It's partly ceiled, and we could put in some nice tar paper or even beaver board."

"Mother Tozer, what the dickens do you think I'm planning to do? I'm not a hired man in a livery stable, or a kid looking for a place to put his birds' eggs! I was thinking of opening an office as a physician!"

Bert made it all easy: "Yuh, but you aren't much of a physician yet. You're just getting your toes in."

"I'm one hell of a good physician! Excuse me for cussing, Mother Tozer, but — Why, nights in the hospital, I've held hundreds of lives in my hand! I intend —"

"Look here, Mart," said Bertie. "As we're putting up the money — I don't want to be a tightwad but after all, a dollar is a dollar — if we furnish the dough, we've got to decide the best way to spend it."

Mr. Tozer looked thoughtful and said helplessly, "That's so. No sense taking a risk, with the blame' farmers demanding all the money they can get for their wheat and cream, and then deliberately going to work and not paying the interest on their loans. I swear, it don't hardly pay to invest in mortgages any longer. No sense putting on lugs. Stands to reason you can look at a fellow's sore throat or prescribe for an ear-ache just as well in a nice simple little office as in some fool place all fixed up like a Moorhead saloon. Mother will see you have a comfortable corner in the barn —"

Leora intruded: "Look here, Papa. I want you to lend us one thousand dol-

lars, outright, to use as we see fit." The sensation was immense. "We'll pay you six per cent — no, we won't; we'll pay you five; that's enough."

"And mortgages bringing six, seven, and eight!" Bert quavered.

"Five's enough. And we want our own say, absolute, as to how we use it — to fit up an office or anything else."

Mr. Tozer began, "That's a foolish way to —"

Bert took it away from him: "Ory, you're crazy! I suppose we'll have to lend you some money, but you'll blame well come to us for it from time to time, and you'll blame well take our advice —"

Leora rose. "Either you do what I say, just exactly what I say, or Mart and I take the first train and go back to Zenith, and I mean it! Plenty of places open for him there, with a big salary, so we won't have to be dependent on any body!"

There was much conversation, most of which sounded like all the rest of it. Once Leora started for the stairs, to go up and pack; once Martin and she stood waving their napkins as they shook their fists, the general composition remarkably like the *Laocoön*.

Leora won.

They settled down to the most solacing fussing.

"Did you bring your trunk up from the depot?" asked Mr. Tozer.

"No sense leaving it there — paying two bits a day storage!" fumed Bert.

"I got it up this morning," said Martin.

"Oh, yes, Martin had it brought up this morning," agreed Mrs. Tozer.

"You had it brought? Didn't you bring it up yourself?" agonized Mr. Tozer.

"No. I had the fellow that runs the lumberyard haul it up for me," said Martin.

"Well, gosh almighty, you could just as well've put it on a wheelbarrow and brought it up yourself and saved a quarter!" said Bert.

"But a doctor has to keep his dignity," said Leora.

"Dignity, rats! Blame sight more dignified to be seen shoving a wheelbarrow than smoking them dirty cigarettes all the time!"

"Well, anyway — Where'd you put it?" asked Mr. Tozer.

"It's up in our room," said Martin.

"Where'd you think we better put it when it's unpacked? The attic is awful full," Mr. Tozer submitted to Mrs. Tozer.

"Oh, I think Martin could get it in there."

"Why couldn't he put it in the barn?"

"Oh, not a nice new trunk like that!"

"What's the matter with the barn?" said Bert. "It's all nice and dry. Seems a shame to waste all that good space in the barn, now that you've gone and decided he mustn't have his dear little office there!"

"Bertie," from Leora, "I know what we'll do. You seem to have the barn

on your brain. You move your old bank there, and Martin'll take the bank building for his office."

"That's entirely different —"

"Now there's no sense you two showing off and trying to be smart," protested Mr. Tozer. "Do you ever hear your mother and I scrapping and fussing like that? When do you think you'll have your trunk unpacked, Mart?" Mr. Tozer could consider barns and he could consider trunks but his was not a brain to grasp two such complicated matters at the same time.

"I can get it unpacked tonight, if it makes any difference —"

"Well, I don't suppose it really makes any special difference, but when you start to *do* a thing —"

"Oh, what difference does it make whether he —"

"If he's going to look for an office, instead of moving right into the barn, he can't take a month of Sundays getting unpacked and —"

"Oh, good Lord, I'll get it done tonight —"

"And I think we can get it in the attic —"

"I tell you it's jam full already —"

"We'll go take a look at it after supper —"

"Well now, I tell you when I tried to get that duck-boat in —"

Martin probably did not scream, but he heard himself screaming. The free and virile land was leagues away and for years forgotten.

## II

To find an office took a fortnight of diplomacy, and of discussion brightening three meals a day, every day. (Not that office-finding was the only thing the Tozers mentioned. They went thoroughly into every moment of Martin's day; they commented on his digestion, his mail, his walks, his shoes that needed cobbling, and whether he had yet taken them to the farmer-trapper-cobbler, and how much the cobbling ought to cost, and the presumable theology, politics, and marital relations of the cobbler.)

Mr. Tozer had from the first known the perfect office. The Norbloms lived above their general store, and Mr. Tozer knew that the Norbloms were thinking of moving. There was indeed nothing that was happening or likely to happen in Wheatsylvania which Mr. Tozer did not know and explain. Mrs. Norblom was tired of keeping house, and she wanted to go to Mrs. Beeson's boarding house (to the front room, on the right as you went along the up-stairs hall, the room with the plaster walls and the nice little stove that Mrs. Beeson bought from Otto Krag for seven dollars and thirty-five cents — no, seven and a quarter it was).

They called on the Norbloms and Mr. Tozer hinted that "it might be nice for the Doctor to locate over the store, if the Norbloms were thinking of making any change —"

The Norbloms stared at each other, with long, bleached, cautious, Scandinavian stares, and grumbled that they “didn’t *know* — of course it was the finest location in town —” Mr. Norblom admitted that if, against all probability, they ever considered moving, they would probably ask twenty-five dollars a month for the flat, unfurnished.

Mr. Tozer came out of the international conference as craftily joyful as any Mr. Secretary Tozer or Lord Tozer in Washington or London:

“Fine! Fine! We made him commit himself! Twenty-five, he says. That means, when the time’s ripe, we’ll offer him eighteen and close for twenty-one-seventy-five. If we just handle him careful, and give him time to go see Mrs. Beeson and fix up about boarding with her, we’ll have him just where we want him!”

“Oh, if the Norbloms can’t make up their minds, then let’s try something else,” said Martin. “There’s a couple of vacant rooms behind the *Eagle* office.”

“What? Go chasing around, after we’ve given the Norbloms reason to think we’re serious, and make enemies of ’em for life? Now that would be a fine way to start building up a practice, wouldn’t it! And I must say I wouldn’t blame the Norbloms one bit for getting wild if you let ’em down like that. This ain’t Zenith, where you can go yelling around expecting to get things done in two minutes!”

Through a fortnight, while the Norbloms agonized over deciding to do what they had long ago decided to do, Martin waited, unable to begin work. Until he should open a certified and recognizable office, most of the village did not regard him as a competent physician but as “that son-in-law of Andy Tozer’s.” In the fortnight he was called only once: for the sick-headache of Miss Agnes Ingleblad, aunt and housekeeper of Alec Ingleblad the barber. He was delighted, till Bert Tozer explained:

“Oh, so *she* called you in, eh? She’s always doctorin’ around. There ain’t a thing the matter with her, but she’s always trying out the latest stunt. Last time it was a fellow that come through here selling pills and liniments out of a Ford, and the time before that it was a faith-healer, crazy loon up here at Dutchman’s Forge, and then for quite a spell she doctored with an osteopath in Leopolis — though I tell you there’s something to this osteopathy — they cure a lot of folks that you regular docs can’t seem to find out what’s the matter with ’em, don’t you think so?”

Martin remarked that he did not think so.

“Oh, you docs!” Bert crowed in his most jocund manner, for Bert could be very joky and bright. “You’re all alike, especially when you’re just out of school and think you know it all. You can’t see any good in chiropractic or electric belts or bone-setters or anything, because they take so many good dollars away from you.”

Then behold the Dr. Martin Arrowsmith who had once infuriated Angus Duer and Irving Watters by his sarcasm on medical standards upholding to a



lewdly grinning Bert Tozer the benevolence and scientific knowledge of all doctors; proclaiming that no medicine had ever (at least by any Winnemac graduate) been prescribed in vain nor any operation needlessly performed.

He saw a good deal of Bert now. He sat about the bank, hoping to be called on a case, his fingers itching for bandages. Ada Quist came in with frequency and Bert laid aside his figuring to be coy with her:

"You got to be careful what you even think about, when the doc is here, Ade. He's been telling me what a whale of a lot of neurology and all that mind-reading stuff he knows. How about it, Mart? I'm getting so scared that I've changed the combination on the safe."

"Heh!" said Ada. "He may fool some folks but he can't fool me. Anybody can learn things in books, but when it comes to practicing 'em — Let me tell you, Mart, if you ever have one-tenth of the savvy that old Dr. Winter of Leop-olis has, you'll live longer than I expect!"

Together they pointed out that for a person who felt his Zenith training had made him so "gosh-awful" smart that he sticks up his nose at us poor hicks of dirt-farmers," Martin's scarf was rather badly tied.

All of his own wit and some of Ada's Bert repeated at the supper table.

"You oughtn't to ride the boy so hard. Still, that was pretty cute about the necktie — I guess Mart does think he's some punkins," chuckled Mr. Tozer.

Leora took Martin aside after supper. "Darlin', can you stand it? We'll have our own house, soon as we can. Or shall we vamoose?"

"I'm by golly going to stand it!"

"Um. Maybe. Dear, when you hit Bertie, do be careful — they'll hang you."

He ambled to the front porch. He determined to view the rooms behind the *Eagle* office. Without a retreat in which to be safe from Bert he could not endure another week. He could not wait for the Norbloms to make up their minds, though they had become to him dread and eternal figures whose enmity would crush him; prodigious gods shadowing this Wheatsylvania which was the only perceptible world.

He was aware, in the late sad light, that a man was tramping the plank walk before the house, hesitating and peering at him. The man was one Wise, a Russian Jew known to the village as "Wise the Polack." In his shack near the railroad he sold silver stock and motor-factory stock, bought and sold farm-lands and horses and muskrat hides. He called out, "That you, Doc?"

"Yup!"

Martin was excited. A patient!

"Say, I wish you'd walk down a ways with me. Couple things I'd like to talk to you about. Or say, come on over to my place and sample some new cigars I've got." He emphasized the word "cigars." North Dakota was, like Mohalis, theoretically dry.

Martin was pleased. He had been sober and industrious so long now!

Wise's shack was a one-story structure, not badly built, half a block from Main Street, with nothing but the railroad track between it and open wheat country. It was lined with pine, pleasant-smelling under the stench of old pipe-smoke. Wise winked — he was a confidential, untrustworthy wisp of a man — and murmured. "Think you could stand a little jolt of first-class Kentucky bourbon?"

"Well, I wouldn't get violent about it."

Wise pulled down the sleazy window-shades and from a warped drawer of his desk brought up a bottle out of which they both drank, wiping the mouth of the bottle with circling palms. Then Wise, abruptly:

"Look here, Doc. You're not like these hicks; you understand that sometimes a fellow gets mixed up in crooked business he didn't intend to. Well, make a long story short, I guess I've sold too much mining stock, and they'll be coming down on me. I've got to be moving — curse it — hoped I could stay settled for couple of years, this time. Well, I hear you're looking for an office. This place would be ideal. Ideal! Two rooms at the back besides this one. I'll rent it to you, furniture and the whole shooting-match, for fifteen dollars a month, if you'll pay me one year in advance. Oh, this ain't phony. Your brother-in-law knows all about my ownership."

Martin tried to be very business-like. Was he not a young doctor who would soon be investing money, one of the most Substantial Citizens in Wheatsylvania? He returned home, and under the parlor lamp, with its green daisies on pink glass, the Tozers listened acutely, Bert stooping forward with open mouth.

"You'd be safe renting it for a year, but that ain't the point," said Bert.

"It certainly isn't! Antagonize the Norbloms, now that they've almost made up their minds to let you have their place? Make me a fool, after all the trouble I've taken?" groaned Mr. Tozer.

They went over it and over it till almost ten o'clock, but Martin was resolute, and the next day he rented Wise's shack.

For the first time in his life he had a place utterly his own, his and Leora's.

In his pride of possession this was the most lordly building on earth, and every rock and weed and doorknob was peculiar and lovely. At sunset he sat on the back stoop (a very interesting and not too broken soap-box) and from the flamboyant horizon the open country flowed across the thin band of the railroad to his feet. Suddenly Leora was beside him, her arm round his neck, and he hymned all the glory of their future:

"Know what I found in the kitchen here? A dandy old auger, hardly rusty a bit, and I can take a box and make a test-tube rack . . . of my own!"

## CHAPTER XV

With none of the profane observations on "medical peddlers" which had annoyed Digamma Pi, Martin studied the catalogue of the New Idea Instrument and Furniture Company, of Jersey City. It was a handsome thing. On the glossy green cover, in red and black, were the portraits of the president, a round quippish man who loved all young physicians; the general manager, a cadaverous scholarly man who surely gave all his laborious nights and days to the advancement of science; and the vice-president, Martin's former preceptor, Dr. Roscoe Geake, who had a lively, eye-glassed, forward-looking modernity all his own. The cover also contained, in surprisingly small space, a quantity of poetic prose, and the inspiring promise:

*Doctor, don't be buffaloed by the unenterprising. No reason why YOU should lack the equipment which impresses patients, makes practice easy, and brings honor and riches. All the high-class supplies which distinguish the Leaders of the Profession from the Dubs are within YOUR reach right NOW by the famous New Idea Financial System: "Just a little down and the rest FREE — out of the increased earnings which New Idea apparatus will bring you!"*

Above, in a border of laurel wreaths and Ionic capitals, was the challenge:

*Sing not the glory of soldiers or explorers or statesmen for who can touch the doctor — wise, heroic, uncontaminated by common greed. Gentlemen, we salute you humbly and herewith offer you the most up-to-the-jiffy catalogue ever presented by any surgical supply house.*

The back cover, though it was less glorious with green and red, was equally arousing. It presented illustrations of the Bindledorf Tonsillectomy Outfit and of an electric cabinet, with the demand:

*Doctor, are you sending your patients off to specialists for tonsil removal or to sanitoriums for electric, etc., treatment? If so, you are losing the chance to show yourself one of the distinguished powers in the domain of medical advancement in your locality, and losing a lot of big fees. Don't you WANT to be a high-class practitioner? Here's the Open Door.*

• *The Bindledorf Outfit is not only useful but exquisitely beautiful, adorns and gives class to any office. We guarantee that by the installation of a Bindledorf Outfit and a New Idea Panaceatic Electro-Therapeutic Cabinet (see details on pp. 34 and 97) you can increase your income from a thousand to ten thousand annually and please patients more than by the most painstaking plugging.*

*When the Great Call sounds, Doctor, and it's time for you to face your reward, will you be satisfied by a big Masonic funeral and tributes from Grateful Patients if you have failed to lay up provision for the kiddies, and faithful wife who has shared your tribulations?*

*You may drive through blizzard and August heat, and go down into the purple shadowed vale of sorrow and wrestle with the ebon cloaked Powers of Darkness for the lives of your patients, but that heroism is incomplete without Modern Progress, to be obtained by the use of a Bindledorf Tonsillectomy Outfit and the New Idea Panaceatic Cabinet, to be obtained on small payment down, rest on easiest terms known in history of medicine!*

## II

This poetry of passion Martin neglected, for his opinion of poetry was like his opinion of electric cabinets, but excitedly he ordered a steel stand, a sterilizer, flasks, test-tubes, and a white-enameled mechanism with enchanting levers and gears which transformed it from examining-chair to operating-table. He yearned over the picture of a centrifuge while Leora was admiring the "stunning seven-piece Reception Room fumed oak set, upholstered in genuine Barcelona Longware Leatherette, will give your office the class and distinction of any high-grade New York specialist's."

"Aw, let 'em sit on plain chairs," Martin grunted.

In the attic Mrs. Tozer found enough seedy chairs for the reception-room, and an ancient bookcase which, when Leora had lined it with pink fringed paper, became a noble instrument-cabinet. Till the examining-chair should arrive, Martin would use Wise's lumpy couch, and Leora busily covered it with white oilcloth. Behind the front room of the tiny office-building were two cubicles, formerly bedroom and kitchen. Martin made them into consultation-room and laboratory. Whistling, he sawed out racks for the glassware and turned the oven of a discarded kerosene stove into a hot-air oven for sterilizing glassware.

"But understand, Lee, I'm not going to go monkeying with any scientific research. I'm through with all that."

Leora smiled innocently. While he worked she sat outside in the long wild grass, sniffing the prairie breeze, her hands about her ankles, but every quarter-hour she had to come in and admire.

Mr. Tozer brought home a package at suppertime. The family opened it, babbling. After supper Martin and Leora hastened with the new treasure to the office and nailed it in place. It was a plate-glass sign; on it in gold letters, "M. Arrowsmith, M.D." They looked up, arms about each other, squealing softly, and in reverence he grunted, "There — by — jiminy!"

They sat on the back stoop, exulting in freedom from Tozers. Along the railroad bumped a freight train with a cheerful clanking. The fireman waved to them from the engine, a brakeman from the platform of the red caboose. After the train there was silence but for the crickets and a distant frog.

"I've never been so happy," he murmured.

## III

He had brought from Zenith his own Ochsner surgical case. As he laid out the instruments he admired the thin, sharp, shining bistoury, the strong teno-tome, the delicate curved needles. With them was a dental forceps. Dad Silva had warned his classes, "Don't forget the country doctor often has to be not only physician but dentist, yes, and priest, divorce lawyer, blacksmith, chauffeur, and road engineer, and if you are too lily-handed for those trades, don't get out of sight of a trolley line and a beauty parlor." And the first patient whom Martin had in the new office, the second patient in Wheatsylvania, was Nils Krag, the carpenter, roaring with an ulcerated tooth. This was a week before the glass sign was up, and Martin rejoiced to Leora, "Begun already! You'll see 'em tumbling in now."

They did not see them tumbling in. For ten days Martin tinkered at his hot-air oven or sat at his desk, reading and trying to look busy. His first joy passed into fretfulness, and he could have yelped at the stillness, the inactivity.

Late one afternoon, when he was in a melancholy way preparing to go home, into the office stamped a grizzled Swedish farmer who grumbled, "Doc, I got a fish-hook caught in my thumb and it's all swole." To Arrowsmith, intern in Zenith General Hospital with its out-patient clinic treating hundreds a day, the dressing of a hand had been less important than borrowing a match, but to Dr. Arrowsmith of Wheatsylvania it was a hectic operation, and the farmer a person remarkable and very charming. Martin shook his left hand violently and burbled, "Now if there's anything, you just 'phone me — you just 'phone me."

There had been, he felt, a rush of admiring patients sufficient to justify them in the one thing Leora and he longed to do, the thing about which they whispered at night: the purchase of a motor car for his country calls.

They had seen the car at Frazier's store.

It was a Ford, five years old, with torn upholstery, a gummy motor, and springs made by a blacksmith who had never made springs before. Next to the chugging of the gas engine at the creamery, the most familiar sound in Wheatsylvania was Frazier's closing the door of his Ford. He banged it flatly at the store, and usually he had to shut it thrice again before he reached home.

But to Martin and Leora, when they had tremblingly bought the car and three new tires and a horn, it was the most impressive vehicle on earth. It was their own; they could go when and where they wished.

During his summer at a Canadian hotel Martin had learned to drive the Ford station wagon, but it was Leora's first venture. Bert had given her so many directions that she had refused to drive the family Overland. When she first sat at the steering wheel, when she moved the hand-throttle with her little finger and felt in her own hands all this power, sorcery enabling her to go as

fast as she might desire (within distinct limits), she transcended human strength, she felt that she could fly like the wild goose — and then in a stretch of sand she killed the engine.

Martin became the demon driver of the village. To ride with him was to sit holding your hat, your eyes closed, waiting for death. Apparently he accelerated for corners, to make them more interesting. The sight of anything on the road ahead, from another motor to a yellow pup, stirred in him a frenzy which could be stilled only by going up and passing it. The village adored, "The Young Doc is quite some driver, all right." They waited, with amiable interest, to hear that he had been killed. It is possible that half of the first dozen patients who drifted into his office came because of awe at his driving . . . the rest because there was nothing serious the matter, and he was nearer than Dr. Hesselink at Groningen.

## IV

With his first admirers he developed his first enemies.

When he met the Norbloms on the street (and in Wheatsylvania it is difficult not to meet everyone on the street every day), they glared. Then he antagonized Pete Yeska.

Pete conducted what he called a "drug store," devoted to the sale of candy, soda water, patent medicines, fly paper, magazines, washing-machines, and Ford accessories, yet Pete would have starved if he had not been postmaster also. He alleged that he was a licensed pharmacist but he so mangled prescriptions that Martin burst into the store and addressed him piously.

"You young docs make me sick," said Pete, "I was putting up prescriptions when you was in the cradle. The old doc that used to be here sent everything to me. My way o' doing things suits me, and I don't figure on changing it for you or any other half-baked young string-bean."

Thereafter Martin had to purchase drugs from St. Paul, overcrowd his tiny laboratory, and prepare his own pills and ointments, looking in a homesick way at the rarely used test-tubes and the dust gathering on the bell glass of his microscope, while Pete Yeska joined with the Norbloms in whispering, "This new doc here ain't any good. You better stick to Hesselink."

## V

So blank, so idle, had been the week that when he heard the telephone at the Tozers', at three in the morning, he rushed to it as though he were awaiting a love message.

A hoarse and shaky voice: "I want to speak to the doctor."

"Yuh — yuh — 'S the doctor speaking."

"This is Henry Novak, four miles northeast, on the Leopolis road. My little girl, Mary, she has a terrible sore throat. I think maybe it is croup and she look awful and — Could you come right away?"

"You bet. Be right there."

Four miles — he would do it in eight minutes.

He dressed swiftly, dragging his worn brown tie together, while Leora beamed over the first night call. He furiously cranked the Ford, banged and clattered past the station and into the wheat prairie. When he had gone six miles by the speedometer, slackening at each rural box to look for the owner's name, he realized that he was lost. He ran into a farm driveway and stopped under the willows, his headlight on a heap of dented milk-cans, broken harvester wheels, cordwood, and bamboo fishing-poles. From the barn dashed a woolly anomalous dog, barking viciously, leaping up at the car.

A frowsy head protruded from a ground-floor window. "What you want?" screamed a Scandinavian voice.

"This is The Doctor. Where does Henry Novak live?"

"Oh! The Doctor! Dr. Hesselink?"

"No! Dr. Arrowsmith.

"Oh. Dr. Arrowsmith. From Wheatsylvania? Um. Well, you went right near his place. You yoost turn back one mile and turn to the right by the brick schoolhouse, and it's about forty rods up the road — the house with a cement silo. Somebody sick by Henry's?"

"Yuh — yuh — girl's got croup — thanks —"

"Yoost keep to the right. You can't miss it."

Probably no one who has listened to the dire "you can't miss it" has ever failed to miss it.

Martin swung the Ford about, grazing a slashed chopping-block; he rattled up the road, took the corner that side of the schoolhouse instead of this, ran half a mile along a boggy trail between pastures, and stopped at a farmhouse. In the surprising fall of silence, cows were to be heard feeding, and a white horse, startled in the darkness, raised its head to wonder at him. He had to arouse the house with wild squawkings of his horn, and an irate farmer who bellowed, "Who's there? I've got a shotgun!" sent him back to the country road.

It was forty minutes from the time of the telephone call when he rushed into a furrowed driveway and saw on the doorstep, against the lamplight, a stooped man who called, "The Doctor? This is Novak."

He found the child in a newly finished bedroom of white plastered walls and pale varnished pine. Only an iron bed, a straight chair, a chromo of St. Anne, and a shadeless handlamp on a rickety stand broke the staring shininess of the apartment, a recent extension of the farmhouse. A heavy-shouldered woman was kneeling by the bed. As she lifted her wet red face, Novak urged:

"Don't cry now; he's here!" And to Martin: "The little one is pretty bad but we done all we could for her. Last night and tonight we steam her throat, and we put her here in our own bedroom!"

Mary was a child of seven or eight. Martin found her lips and finger-tips

blue, but in her face no flush. In the effort to expel her breath she writhed into terrifying knots, then coughed up saliva dotted with grayish specks. Martin worried as he took out his clinical thermometer and gave it a professional-looking shake.

It was, he decided, laryngeal croup or diphtheria. Probably diphtheria. No time now for bacteriological examination, for cultures and leisurely precision. Silva the healer bulked in the room, crowding out Gottlieb the inhuman perfectionist. Martin leaned nervously over the child on the tousled bed, absent-mindedly trying her pulse again and again. He felt helpless without the equipment of Zenith General, its nurses and Angus Duer's sure advice. He had a sudden respect for the lone country doctor.

He had to make a decision, irrevocable, perhaps perilous. He would use diphtheria antitoxin. But certainly he could not obtain it from Pete Yeska's in Wheatsylvania.

Leopolis?

"Hustle up and get me Blassner, the druggist at Leopolis, on the 'phone," he said to Novak, as calmly as he could contrive. He pictured Blassner driving through the night, respectfully bringing the antitoxin to The Doctor. While Novak bellowed into the farm-line telephone in the dining-room, Martin waited — waited — staring at the child; Mrs. Novak waited for him to do miracles; the child's tossing and hoarse gasping became horrible; and the glaring walls, the glaring lines of pale yellow woodwork, hypnotized him into sleepiness. It was too late for anything short of antitoxin or tracheotomy. Should he operate; cut into the wind-pipe that she might breathe? He stood and worried; he drowned in sleepiness and shook himself awake. He had to do something, with the mother kneeling there, gaping at him, beginning to look doubtful.

"Get some hot cloths — towels, napkins — and keep 'em around her neck. I wish to God he'd get that telephone call!" he fretted.

As Mrs. Novak, padding on thick slippers feet, brought in the hot cloths, Novak appeared with a blank "Nobody sleeping at the drug store, and Blassner's house-line is out of order."

"Then listen. I'm afraid this may be serious. I've got to have antitoxin. Going to drive t' Leopolis and get it. You keep up these hot applications and - Wish we had an atomizer. And room ought to be moister. Got n' alcohol stove? Keep some water boiling in here. No use of medicine. B' right back."

He drove the twenty-four miles to Leopolis in thirty-seven minutes. Not once did he slow down for a cross-road. He defied the curves, the roots thrusting out into the road, though always one dark spot in his mind feared a blow-out and a swerve. The speed, the casting away of all caution, wrought in him a high exultation, and it was blessed to be in the cool air and alone, after the strain of Mrs. Novak's watching. In his mind all the while was the page in



Osler regarding diphtheria, the very picture of the words: "In severe cases the first dose should be from 8,000 —" No. Oh, yes: "—from 10,000 to 15,000 units."

He regained confidence. He thanked the god of science for antitoxin and for the gas motor. It was, he decided, a Race with Death.

"I'm going to do it — going to pull it off and save that poor kid!" he rejoiced.

He approached a grade crossing and hurled toward it, ignoring possible trains. He was aware of a devouring whistle, saw sliding light on the rails, and brought up sharp. Past him, ten feet from his front wheels, flung the Seattle Express like a flying volcano. The fireman was stoking, and even in the thin clearness of coming dawn the glow from the fire-box was appalling on the under side of the rolling smoke. Instantly the apparition was gone and Martin sat trembling, hands trembling on the little steering-wheel, foot trembling like St. Vitus's dance on the brake. "That was an awful close thing!" he muttered, and thought of a widowed Leora, abandoned to Tozers. But the vision of the Novak child, struggling for each terrible breath, overrode all else. "Hell! I've killed the engine!" he groaned. He vaulted over the side, cranked the car, and dashed into Leopolis.

To Crynsen County, Leopolis with its four thousand people was a metropolis, but in the pinched stillness of the dawn it was a tiny graveyard: Main Street a sandy expanse, the low shops desolate as huts. He found one place astir; in the bleak office of the Dakota Hotel the night clerk was playing poker with the bus-driver and the town policeman.

They wondered at his hysterical entrance.

"Dr. Arrowsmith, from Wheatsylvania. Kid dying from diphtheria. Where's Blassner live? Jump in my car and show me."

The constable was a lanky old man, his vest swinging open over a collarless shirt, his trousers in folds, his eyes resolute. He guided Martin to the home of the druggist, he kicked the door, then, standing with his lean and bristly visage upraised in the cold early light, he bawled, "Ed! Hey, you, Ed! Come out of it!"

Ed Blassner grumbled from the up-stairs window. To him, death and furious doctors had small novelty. While he drew on his trousers and coat he was to be heard discoursing to his drowsy wife on the woes of druggists and the desirability of moving to Los Angeles and going into real estate. But he did have diphtheria antitoxin in his shop, and sixteen minutes after Martin's escape from being killed by a train he was speeding to Henry Novak's.

## VI

The child was still alive when he came brusquely into the house.

All the way back he had seen her dead and stiff. He grunted "Thank God!" and angrily called for hot water. He was no longer the embarrassed cub doctor

but the wise and heroic physician who had won the Race with Death, and in the peasant eyes of Mrs. Novak, in Henry's nervous obedience, he read his power.

Swiftly, smoothly, he made intravenous injection of the antitoxin, and stood expectant.

The child's breathing did not at first vary, as she choked in the labor of expelling her breath. There was a gurgle, a struggle in which her face blackened, and she was still. Martin peered, incredulous. Slowly the Novaks began to glower, shaky hands at their lips. Slowly they knew the child was gone.

In the hospital, death had become indifferent and natural to Martin. He had said to Angus, he had heard nurses say one to another, quite cheerfully, "Well, fifty-seven has just passed out." Now he raged with desire to do the impossible. She *couldn't* be dead. He'd do something — All the while he was groaning, "I should've operated — I should have." So insistent was the thought that for a time he did not realize that Mrs. Novak was clamoring, "She is dead? Dead?"

He nodded, afraid to look at the woman.

"You killed her, with that needle thing! And not even tell us, so we could call the priest!"

He crawled past her lamentations and the man's sorrow and drove home, empty of heart.

"I shall never practice medicine again," he reflected.

"I'm through," he said to Leora. "I'm no good. I should of operated. I can't face people, when they know about it. I'm through. I'll go get a lab job — Dawson Hunziker or some place."

Salutary was the tartness with which she protested, "You're the most conceited man that ever lived! Do you think you're the only doctor that ever lost a patient! I know you did everything you could." But he went about next day torturing himself, the more tortured when Mr. Tozer whined at supper, "Henry Novak and his woman was in town today. They say you ought to have saved their girl. Why didn't you give your mind to it and manage to cure her somehow? Ought to tried. Kind of too bad, because the Novaks have a lot of influence with all these Pole and Hunky farmers."

After a night when he was too tired to sleep, Martin suddenly drove to Leopolis.

From the Tozers he had heard almost religious praise of Dr. Adam Winter, of Leopolis, a man of nearly seventy, the pioneer physician of Crynsen County, and to this sage he was fleeing. As he drove he mocked furiously his melodramatic Race with Death, and he came wearily into the dust-whirling Main Street. Dr. Winter's office was above a grocery, in a long "block" of bright red brick stores with an Egyptian cornice — of tin. The darkness of the broad hallway was soothing after the prairie heat and incandescence. Martin had to wait till three respectful patients had been received by Dr. Winter, a hoary man with a sympathetic bass voice, before he was admitted to the consultation-room.

The examining-chair was of doubtful superiority to that once used by Doc Vickerson of Elk Mills, and sterilizing was apparently done in a wash-bowl, but in a corner was an electric therapeutic cabinet with more electrodes and pads than Martin had ever seen.

He told the story of the Novaks, and Winter cried, "Why, Doctor, you did everything you could have and more too. Only thing is, next time, in a crucial case, you better call some older doctor in consultation — not that you need his advice, but it makes a hit with the family, it divides the responsibility, and keeps 'em from going around criticizing. I, uh, I frequently have the honor of being called by some of my younger colleagues. Just wait. I'll 'phone the editor of the *Gazette* and give him an item about the case."

When he had telephoned, Dr. Winter shook hands ardently. He indicated his electric cabinet. "Got one of those things yet? Ought to, my boy. Don't know as I use it very often, except with the cranks that haven't anything the matter with 'em, but say, it would surprise you how it impresses folks. Well, Doctor, welcome to Crynsen County. Married? Won't you and your wife come take dinner with us some Sunday noon? Mrs. Winter will be real pleased to meet you. And if I ever can be of service to you in a consultation—I only charge a very little more than my regular fee, and it looks so well, talking the case over with an older man."

Driving home, Martin fell into vain and wicked boasting:

"You bet I'll stick to it! At worst, I'll never be as bad as that snuffling old fee-splitter!"

Two weeks after, the *Wheatsylvania Eagle*, a smeary four-page rag, reported:

*Our enterprising contemporary, the Leopolis Gazette, had as follows last week to say of one of our townsmen who we recently welcomed to our midst.*

*"Dr. M. Arrowsmith of Wheatsylvania is being congratulated, we are informed by our valued pioneer local physician, Dr. Adam Winter, by the medical fraternity all through the Pony River Valley, there being no occupation or profession more unselfishly appreciative of each other's virtues than the medical gentlemen, on the courage and enterprise he recently displayed in addition to his scientific skill.*

*"Being called to attend the little daughter of Henry Norwalk of near Delft the well-known farmer and finding the little one near death with diphtheria he made a desperate attempt to save it by himself bringing antitoxin from Blassner our ever popular druggist, who had on hand a full and fresh supply. He drove out and back in his gasoline chariot, making the total distance of 48 miles in 79 minutes.*

*"Fortunately our ever alert policeman, Joe Colby, was on the job and helped Dr. Arrowsmith find Mr. Blassner's bungalow on Red River Avenue and this gentleman rose from bed and hastened to supply the doctor with the needed article but unfortunately the child was already too low to be saved but it is by such incidents of pluck and quick thinking as well as knowledge which make the medical profession one of our greatest blessings."*

Two hours after this was published, Miss Agnes Ingleblad came in for another discussion of her non-existent ailments, and two days later Henry Novak appeared, saying proudly:

"Well, Doc, we all done what we could for the poor little girl, but I guess I waited too long calling you. The woman is awful" cut up. She and I was reading that piece in the *Eagle* about it. We showed it to the priest. Say, Doc, I wish you'd take a look at my foot. I got kind of a rheumatic pain in the ankle."

## CHAPTER XVI

When he had practiced medicine in Wheatsylvania for one year, Martin was an inconspicuous but not discouraged country doctor. In summer Leora and he drove to the Pony River for picnic suppers and a swim, very noisy, splashing, and immodest; through autumn he went duck-hunting with Bert Tozer, who became nearly tolerable when he stood at sunset on a pass between two slews; and with winter isolating the village in a sun-blank desert of snow, they had sleigh-rides, card-parties, "sociables" at the churches.

When Martin's flock turned to him for help, their need and their patient obedience made them beautiful. Once or twice he lost his temper with jovial villagers who bountifully explained to him that he was less aged than he might have been; once or twice he drank too much whisky at poker parties in the back room of the Co-operative Store; but he was known as reliable, skillful, and honest — and on the whole he was rather less distinguished than Alec Ingleblad the barber, less prosperous than Nils Krag the carpenter, and less interesting to his neighbors than the Finnish garageman.

Then one accident and one mistake made him famous for full twelve miles about.

He had gone fishing, in the spring. As he passed a farmhouse a woman ran out shrieking that her baby had swallowed a thimble and was choking to death. Martin had for surgical kit a large jack-knife. He sharpened it on the farmer's oilstone, sterilized it in the tea-kettle, operated on the baby's throat, and saved its life.

Every newspaper in the Pony River Valley had a paragraph, and before this sensation was over he cured Miss Agnes Ingleblad of her desire to be cured.

She had achieved cold hands and a slow circulation, and he was called at midnight. He was soggily sleepy, after two country drives on muddy roads, and in his torpor he gave her an overdose of strychnin, which so shocked and stimulated her that she decided to be well. It was so violent a change that it made her more interesting than being an invalid — people had of late taken remarkably small pleasure in her symptoms. She went about praising Martin, and all the world said, "I hear this Doc Arrowsmith is the only fellow Agnes ever doctored with that's done her a mite of good."

He gathered a practice small, sound, and in no way remarkable. Leora and

he moved from the Tozers' to a cottage of their own, with a parlor-dining-room which displayed a nicked stove on bright, new, pleasant-smelling linoleum, and a golden-oak sideboard with a souvenir match-holder from Lake Minnetonka. He bought a small Roentgen ray outfit; and he was made a director of the Tozer bank. He became too busy to long for his days of scientific research, which had never existed, and Leora sighed:

"It's fierce, being married. I did expect I'd have to follow you out on the road and be a hobo, but I never expected to be a Pillar of the Community. Well, I'm too lazy to look up a new husband. Only I warn you: when you become the Sunday School superintendent, you needn't expect me to play the organ and smile at the cute jokes you make about Willy's not learning his Golden Text."

## II

So did Martin stumble into respectability.

In the autumn of 1912, when Mr. Debs, Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Taft were campaigning for the presidency, when Martin Arrowsmith had lived in Wheatsylvania for a year and a half, Bert Tozer became a Prominent Booster. He returned from the state convention of the Modern Woodmen of America with notions. Several towns had sent boosting delegations to the convention, and the village of Groningen had turned out a motor procession of five cars, each with an enormous pennant, "Groningen for White Men and Black Dirt."

Bert came back clamoring that every motor in town must carry a Wheatsylvania pennant. He had bought thirty of them, and they were on sale at the bank at seventy-five cents apiece. This, Bert explained to everyone who came into the bank, was exactly cost-price, which was within eleven cents of the truth. He came galloping at Martin, demanding that he be the first to display a pennant.

"I don't want one of those fool things flopping from my 'bus," protested Martin. "What's the idea, anyway?"

"What's the *idea*? To advertise your own town, of course!"

"What is there to advertise? Do you think you're going to make strangers believe Wheatsylvania is a metropolis like New York or Jimtown by hanging a dusty rag behind a secondhand tin Lizzie?"

"You never did have any patriotism! Let me tell you, Mart, if you don't put on a banner I'll see to it that everybody in town notices it!"

While the other rickety cars of the village announced to the world, or at least to several square miles of the world, that Wheatsylvania was the "Wonder Town of Central N. D.," Martin's clattering Ford went bare; and when his enemy Norblom remarked, "I like to see a fellow have some public spirit and appreciate the place he gets his money outa," the citizenry nodded and spat, and began to question Martin's fame as a worker of miracles.

## III

He had intimates — the barber, the editor of the *Eagle*, the garageman — to whom he talked comfortably of hunting and the crops, and with whom he played poker. Perhaps he was too intimate with them. It was the theory of Crynsen County that it was quite all right for a young professional man to take a timely drink providing he kept it secret and made up for it by yearning over the clergy of the neighborhood. But with the clergy Martin was brief, and his drinking and poker he never concealed.

If he was bored by the United Brethren minister's discourse on doctrine, on the wickedness of movies, and the scandalous pay of pastors, it was not at all because he was a distant and supersensitive young man but because he found more savor in the garageman's salty remarks on the art of remembering to ante in poker.

Through all the state there were celebrated poker players, rustic-looking men with stolid faces, men who sat in shirt-sleeves, chewing tobacco; men whose longest remark was "By me," and who delighted to plunder the gilded and condescending traveling salesmen. When there was news of a "big game on," the county sports dropped in silently and went to work — the sewing-machine agent from Leopolis, the undertaker from Vanderheide's Grove, the bootlegger from St. Luke, the red fat man from Melody who had no known profession.

Once (still do men tell of it gratefully, up and down the Valley), they played for seventy-two unbroken hours, in the office of the Wheatsylvania garage. It had been a livery-stable; it was littered with robes and long whips, and the smell of horses mingled with the reek of gasoline.

The players came and went, and sometimes they slept on the floor for an hour or two, but they were never less than four in the game. The stink of cheap feeble cigarettes and cheap powerful cigars hovered about the table like a malign spirit; the floor was scattered with stubs, matches, old cards, and whisky bottles. Among the warriors were Martin, Alec Ingleblad the barber, and a highway engineer, all of them stripped to flannel undershirts, not moving for hour on hour, ruffling their cards, eyes squinting and vacant.

When Bert Tozer heard of the affair, he feared for the good fame of Wheatsylvania, and to everyone he gossiped about Martin's evil ways and his own patience. Thus it happened that while Martin was at the height of his prosperity and credit as a physician, along the Pony River Valley sinuated the whispers that he was a gambler, that he was a "drinking man," that he never went to church; and all the godly enjoyed mourning, "Too bad to see a decent young man like that going to the dogs."

Martin was as impatient as he was stubborn. He resented the well-meant greetings: "You ought to leave a little hooch for the rest of us to drink, Doc," or "I s'pose you're too busy playing poker to drive out to the house and take a

look at the woman." He was guilty of an absurd and boyish tactlessness when he heard Norblom observing to the postmaster, "A fellow that calls himself a doctor just because he had luck with that fool Agnes Ingleblad, he hadn't ought to go getting drunk and disgracing —"

Martin stopped. "Norblom! You talking about me?"

The storekeeper turned slowly. "I got more important things to do 'n talk about you," he cackled.

As Martin went on he heard laughter.

He told himself that these villagers were generous; that their snooping was in part an affectionate interest, and inevitable in a village where the most absorbing event of the year was the United Brethren Sunday School picnic on Fourth of July. But he could not rid himself of twitchy discomfort at their unending and maddeningly detailed comments on everything. He felt as though the lightest word he said in his consultation-room would be megaphoned from flapping ear to ear all down the country roads.

He was contented enough in gossiping about fishing with the barber, nor was he condescending to meteorologicomania, but except for Leora he had no one with whom he could talk of his work. Angus Duer had been cold, but Angus had his teeth into every change of surgical technique, and he was an acrid debater. Martin saw that, unless he struggled, not only would he harden into timid morality under the pressure of the village, but be fixed in a routine of prescriptions and bandaging.

He might find a stimulant in Dr. Hesselink of Groningen.

He had seen Hesselink only once, but everywhere he heard of him as the most honest practitioner in the Valley. On impulse Martin drove down to call on him.

Dr. Hesselink was a man of forty, ruddy, tall, broad-shouldered. You knew immediately that he was careful and that he was afraid of nothing, however much he might lack in imagination. He received Martin with no vast ebullience, and his stare said, "Well, what do you want? I'm a busy man."

"Doctor," Martin chattered, "do you find it hard to keep up with medical developments?"

"No. Read the medical journals."

"Well, don't you — gosh, I don't want to get sentimental about it, but don't you find that without contact with the Big Guns you get mentally lazy — sort of lacking in inspiration?"

"I do not! There's enough inspiration for me in trying to help the sick."

To himself Martin was protesting, "All right, if you don't want to be friendly, go to the devil!" But he tried again:

"I know. But for the game of the thing, for the pleasure of increasing medical knowledge, how can you keep up if you don't have anything but routine practice among a lot of farmers?"

"Arrowsmith, I may do you an injustice, but there's a lot of you young practitioners who feel superior to the farmers, that are doing their own jobs better than you are. You think that if you were only in the city with libraries and medical meetings and everything, you'd develop. Well, I don't know of anything to prevent your studying at home! You consider yourself so much better educated than these rustics, but I notice you say 'gosh' and 'Big Guns' and that sort of thing. How much do you read? Personally, I'm extremely well satisfied. My people pay me an excellent living wage, they appreciate my work, and they honor me by election to the schoolboard. I find that a good many of these farmers think a lot harder and squarer than the swells I meet in the city. Well! I don't see any reason for feeling superior, or lonely either!"

"Hell, I don't!" Martin mumbled. As he drove back he raged at Hesselink's superiority about not feeling superior, but he stumbled into uncomfortable meditation. It was true; he was half-educated. He was supposed to be a college graduate but he knew nothing of economics, nothing of history, nothing of music or painting. Except in hasty bolting for examinations he had read no poetry save that of Robert Service, and the only prose besides medical journalism at which he looked nowadays was the baseball and murder news in the Minneapolis papers and Wild West stories in the magazines.

He reviewed the "intelligent conversation" which, in the desert of Wheat-sylvania, he believed himself to have conducted at Mohalis. He remembered that to Clif Clawson it had been pretentious to use any phrase which was not as colloquial and as smutty as the speech of a truck-driver, and that his own discourse had differed from Clif's largely in that it had been less fantastic and less original. He could recall nothing save the philosophy of Max Gottlieb, occasional scoldings of Angus Duer, one out of ten among Madeline Fox's digressions, and the councils of Dad Silva which was above the level of Alec Ingleblad's barber-shop.

He came home hating Hesselink but by no means loving himself; he fell upon Leora and, to her placid agreement, announced that they were "going to get educated, if it kills us." He went at it as he had gone at bacteriology.

He read European history aloud at Leora, who looked interested or at least forgiving; he worried the sentences in a copy of "The Golden Bowl" which an unfortunate school-teacher had left at the Tozers'; he borrowed a volume of Conrad from the village editor and afterward, as he drove the prairie roads, he was marching into jungle villages — sun helmets, orchids, lost temples of obscene and dog-faced deities, secret and sun-scarred rivers. He was conscious of his own mean vocabulary. It cannot be said that he became immediately and conspicuously articulate, yet it is possible that in those long intense evenings of reading with Leora he advanced a step or two toward the tragic enchantments of Max Gottlieb's world — enchanting sometimes and tragic always.

But in becoming a schoolboy again he was not so satisfied as Dr. Hesselink.



## IV

Gustaf Sondelius was back in America.

In medical school, Martin had read of Sondelius, the soldier of science. He held reasonable and lengthy degrees, but he was a rich man and eccentric, and neither toiled in laboratories nor had a decent office and a home and a lazy wife. He roamed the world fighting epidemics and founding institutions and making inconvenient speeches and trying new drinks. He was a Swede by birth, a German by education, a little of everything by speech, and his clubs were in London, Paris, Washington, and New York. He had been heard of from Batoum and Fuchau, from Milan and Bechuanaland, from Antofagasta and Cape Romanzoff. Manson on Tropical Diseases mentions Sondelius's admirable method of killing rats with hydrocyanic acid gas, and *The Sketch* once mentioned his atrocious system in baccarat.

Gustaf Sondelius shouted, in high places and low, that most diseases could be and must be wiped out; that tuberculosis, cancer, typhoid, the plague, influenza, were an invading army against which the world must mobilize — literally; that public health authorities must supersede generals and oil kings. He was lecturing through America, and his exclamatory assertions were syndicated in the press.

Martin sniffed at most newspaper articles touching on science or health but Sondelius's violence caught him, and suddenly he was converted, and it was an important thing for him, that conversion.

He told himself that however much he might relieve the sick, essentially he was a business man, in rivalry with Dr. Winter of Leopolis and Dr. Hesselink of Groningen; that though they might be honest, honesty and healing were less their purpose than making money; that to get rid of avoidable disease and produce a healthy population would be the worst thing in the world for them; and that they must all be replaced by public health officials.

Like all ardent agnostics, Martin was a religious man. Since the death of his Gottlieb-cult he had unconsciously sought a new passion, and he found it now in Gustaf Sondelius's war on disease. Immediately he became as annoying to his patients as he had once been to Digamma Pi.

He informed the farmers at Delft that they had no right to have so much tuberculosis.

This was infuriating, because none of their rights as American citizens was better established, or more often used, than the privilege of being ill. They fumed, "Who does he think he is? We call him in for doctoring, not for bossing. Why, the damn' fool said we ought to burn down our houses — said we were committing a crime if we had the con. here! Won't stand for nobody talking to me like that!"

Everything became clear to Martin — too clear. The nation must make the

best physicians autocratic officials, at once, and that was all there was to it. As to how the officials were to become perfect executives, and how people were to be persuaded to obey them, he had no suggestions but only a beautiful faith. At breakfast he scolded, "Another idiotic day of writing prescriptions for belly-aches that ought never to have happened! If I could only get into the Big Fight, along with men like Sondelius! It makes me tired!"

Leora murmured, "Yes, darling. I'll promise to be good. I won't have any little bellyaches or T.B. or anything, so please don't lecture me!"

Even in his irritability he was gentle, for Leora was with child.

v

Their baby was coming in five months. Martin promised to it everything he had missed.

"He's going to have a real education!" he gloated, as they sat on the porch in spring twilight. "He'll learn all this literature and stuff. We haven't done much ourselves — here we are, stuck in this two-by-twice crossroads for the rest of our lives — but maybe we've gone a little beyond our dads, and he'll go way beyond us."

He was worried, for all his flamboyance. Leora had undue morning sickness. Till noon she dragged about the house, pea-green and tousled and hollow-faced. He found a sort of maid, and came home to help, to wipe the dishes and sweep the front walk. All evening he read to her, not history now and Henry James but "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," which both of them esteemed a very fine tale. He sat on the floor by the grubby second-hand couch on which she lay in her weakness; he held her hand and crowed:

"Golly, we — No, not 'golly.' Well, what *can* you say except 'golly'? Some day we'll save up enough money for a couple months in Italy and all those places. All those old narrow streets and old castles! There must be scads of 'em that are couple hundred years old or older! And we'll take the boy . . . Even if he turns out to be a girl, darn him! . . . And he'll learn to chatter Wop and French and everything like a regular native, and his dad and mother'll be so proud! Oh, we'll be a fierce pair of old birds! We never did have any more morals 'n a rabbit, either of us, and probably when we're seventy we'll sit out on the doorstep and smoke pipes and snicker at all the respectable people going by, and tell each other scandalous stories about 'em till they want to take a shot at us, and our boy — he'll wear a plug hat and have a chauffeur — he won't dare to recognize us!"

Trained now to the false cheerfulness of the doctor, he shouted, when she was racked and ghastly with the indignity of morning sickness, "There, that's fine, old girl! Wouldn't be making a good baby if you weren't sick. Everybody is." He was lying, and he was nervous. Whenever he thought of her dying, he

seemed to die with her. Barren of her companionship, there would be nothing he wanted to do, nowhere to go. What would be the worth of having all the world if he could not show it to her, if she was not there —

He denounced Nature for her way of tricking human beings, by every gay device of moonlight and white limbs and reaching loneliness, into having babies, then making birth as cruel and clumsy and wasteful as she could. He was abrupt and jerky with patients who called him into the country. With their suffering he was sympathetic as he had never been, for his eyes had opened to the terrible beauty of pain, but he must not go far from Leora's need.

Her morning sickness turned into pernicious vomiting. Suddenly, while she was torn and inhuman with agony, he sent for Dr. Hesselink, and that horrible afternoon when the prairie spring was exuberant outside the windows of the poor iodoform-reeking room, they took the baby from her, dead.

Had it been possible, he might have understood Hesselink's success then, have noted that gravity and charm, that pity and sureness, which made people entrust their lives to him. Not cold and blaming was Hesselink now, but an older and wiser brother, very compassionate. Martin saw nothing. He was not a physician. He was a terrified boy, less useful to Hesselink than the dumbest nurse.

When he was certain that Leora would recover, Martin sat by her bed, coaxing, "We'll just have to make up our minds we never can have a baby now, and so I want — Oh, I'm no good! And I've got a rotten temper. But to you, I want to be everything!"

She whispered, scarce to be heard:

"He would have been such a sweet baby. Oh, I know! I saw him so often. Because I knew he was going to be like you, when you were a baby." She tried to laugh. "Perhaps I wanted him because I could boss him. I've never had anybody that would let me boss him. So if I can't have a real baby, I'll have to bring you up. Make you a great man that everybody will wonder at, like your Sondelius. . . . Darling, I worried so about your worrying —"

He kissed her, and for hours they sat together, unspeaking, eternally understanding, in the prairie twilight.

## CHAPTER XVII

—Dr. Coughlin of Leopolis had a red mustache, a large heartiness, and a Maxwell which, though it was three years old this May and deplorable as to varnish, he believed to be the superior in speed and beauty of any motor in Dakota.

He came home in high cheerfulness, rode the youngest of his three children pickaback, and remarked to his wife:

"Tessie, I got a swell idea."

"Yes, and you got a swell breath, too. I wish you'd quit testing that old Spirits Frumentus bottle at the drug store!"

"'At a girl! But honest, listen!"

"I will not!" She bussed him heartily. "Nothing doing about driving to Los Angeles this summer. Too far, with all the brats squalling."

"Sure. All right. But I mean: Let's pack up and light out and spend a week touring 'round the state. Say tomorrow or next day. Got nothing to keep me now except that obstetrical case, and we'll hand that over to Winter."

"All right. We can try out the new thermos bottles!"

Dr. Coughlin, his lady, and the children started at four in the morning. The car was at first too well arranged to be interesting, but after three days, as he approached you on the flat road that without an inch of curving was lashed for leagues through the grassy young wheat, you saw the doctor in his khaki suit, his horn-rimmed spectacles, and white linen boating hat; his wife in a green flannel blouse and a lace boudoir cap. The rest of the car was slightly confused. While you motored by you noticed a canvas Egyptian Water Bottle, mud on wheels and fenders, a spade, two older children leaning perilously out and making tongues at you, the baby's diapers hanging on a line across the tonneau, a torn copy of *Snappy Stories*, seven lollypop sticks, a jack, a fish-rod, and a rolled tent.

Your last impression was of two large pennants labeled "Leopolis, N. D.," and "Excuse Our Dust."

The Coughlins had agreeable adventures. Once they were stuck in a mud-hole. To the shrieking admiration of the family, the doctor got them out by making a bridge of fence rails. Once the ignition ceased and, while they awaited a garageman summoned by telephone, they viewed a dairy farm with an electrical milking machine. All the way they were broadened by travel, and discovered the wonders of the great world: the movie theater at Roundup, which had for orchestra not only a hand-played piano but also a violin; the black fox farm at Melody; and the Severance water-tower, which was said to be the tallest in Central North Dakota.

Dr. Coughlin "dropped in to pass the time of day," as he said, with all the doctors. At St. Luke he had an intimate friend in Dr. Tromp — at least they had met twice, at the annual meetings of the Pony River Valley Medical Association. When he told Tromp how bad they had found the hotels, Tromp looked uneasy and conscientious, and sighed, "If the wife could fix it up somehow, I'd like to invite you all to stay with us tonight."

"Oh, don't want to impose on you. Sure it wouldn't be any trouble?" said Coughlin.

After Mrs. Tromp had recovered from her desire to call her husband aside and make unheard but vigorous observations, and after the oldest Tromp boy had learned that "it wasn't nice for a little gentleman to kick his wee guests that came from so far, far away," they were all very happy. Mrs. Coughlin and Mrs. Tromp bewailed the cost of laundry soap and butter, and exchanged recipes for pickled peaches, while the men, sitting on the edge of the porch.

their knees crossed, eloquently waving their cigars, gave themselves up to the ecstasy of shop-talk:

"Say, Doctor, how do you find collections?"

(It was Coughlin speaking — or it might have been Tromp.)

"Well, they're pretty good. These Germans pay up first rate. Never send 'em a bill, but when they've harvested they come in and say, 'How much do I owe you, Doctor?'"

"Yuh, the Germans are pretty good pay."

"Yump, they certainly are. Not many dead-beats among the Germans."

"Yes, that's a fact. Say, tell me, Doctor, what do you do with your jaundice cases?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Doctor: if it's a persistent case I usually give ammonium chlorid."

"Do you? I've been giving ammonium chlorid but here the other day I see a communication in the *Journal of the A.M.A.* where a fellow was claiming it wasn't any good."

"Is that a fact! Well, well! I didn't see that. Hum. Well. Say, Doctor, do you find you can do much with asthma?"

"Well now, Doctor, just in confidence, I'm going to tell you something that may strike you as funny, but I believe that foxes' lungs are fine for asthma, and T.B. too. I told that to a Sioux City pulmonary specialist one time and he laughed at me — said it wasn't scientific — and I said to him, 'Hell!' I said, 'scientific!' I said, 'I don't know if it's the latest fad and wrinkle in science or not,' I said, 'but I get results, and that's what I'm looking for's results!' I said. I tell you a plug G.P. may not have a lot of letters after his name, but he sees a slew of mysterious things that he can't explain, and I swear I believe most of these damn' alleged scientists could learn a whale of a lot from the plain country practitioners, let me tell you!"

"Yuh, that's a fact. Personally I'd rather stay right here in the country and be able to do a little hunting and take it easy than be the classiest specialist in the cities. One time I kind of figured on becoming an X-ray specialist — place in New York where you can take the whole course in eight weeks — and maybe settling in Butte or Sioux Falls, but I figured that even if I got to making eight-ten thousand a year, 'twouldn't hardly mean more than three thousand does here and so — And a fellow has to consider his duty to his old patients."

"That's so. . . . Say, Doctor, say, what sort of fellow is McInturn, down your way?"

"Well, I don't like to knock any fellow practitioner, and I suppose he's well intentioned, but just between you and me he does too confounded much guess-work. Now you take you and me, we apply *science* to a case, instead of taking a chance and just relying on experience and going off half-cocked. But McMin-turn, he doesn't know enough. And *say*, that wife of his, she's a caution —

she's got the meanest tongue in four counties, and the way she chases around drumming up business for Mac — Well, I suppose that's their way of doing business."

"Is old Winter keeping going?"

"Oh, yes, in a sort of way. You know how he is. Of course he's about twenty years behind the times, but he's a great hand-holder — keep some fool woman in bed six weeks longer than he needs to, and call around twice a day and chin with her — absolutely unnecessary."

"I suppose you get your biggest competition from Silzer, Doctor?"

"Don't you believe it, Doctor! He isn't beginning to do the practice he lets on to. Trouble with Silzer is, he's too brash — shoots off his mouth too much — likes to hear himself talk. Oh, say, by the way, have you run into this new fellow — will be located here about two years now — at Wheatsylvania — Arrowsmith?"

"No, but they say he's a good bright young fellow."

"Yes, they claim he's a brainy man — very well-informed — and I hear his wife is a nice brainy little woman."

"I hear Arrowsmith hits it up too much though — likes his booze awful well."

"Yes, so they say. Shame, for a nice hustling young fellow. I like a nip myself, now and then, but a Drinking Man —! Suppose he's drunk and gets called out on a case! And a fellow from down there was telling me Arrowsmith is great on books and study, but he's a freethinker — never goes to church."

"Is that a fact! Hm. Great mistake for any doctor to not identify himself with some good solid religious denomination, whether he believes the stuff or not. I tell you a priest or a preacher can send you an awful lot of business."

"You bet he can! Well, this fellow said Arrowsmith was always arguing with the preachers — he told some Reverend that everybody ought to read this immunologist Max Gottlieb, and this Jacques Loeb — you know — the fellow that, well, I don't recall just exactly what it was, but he claimed he could create living fishes out of chemicals."

"Sure! There you got it! That's the kind of delusions these laboratory fellows get unless they have some practical practice to keep 'em well balanced. Well, if Arrowsmith falls for that kind of fellow, no wonder people don't trust him."

"That's so. Hm. Well, it's too bad Arrowsmith goes drinking and helling around and neglecting his family and his patients. I can see his finish. Shame. Well — wonder what time o' night it's getting to be?"

## II

Bert Tozer wailed, "Mart, what you been doing to Dr. Coughlin of Leopoldis? Fellow told me he was going around saying you were a booze-hoister and so on."

"Did he? People do sort of keep an eye on one another around here, don't they?"

"You bet your life they do, and that's why I tell you you ought to cut out the poker and the booze. You don't see *me* needing any liquor, do you?"

Martin more desperately than ever felt the whole county watching him. He was not a praise-eater; he was not proud that he should feel misplaced; but however sturdily he struggled he saw himself outside the picture of Wheat-sylvania and trudging years of country practice.

Suddenly, without planning it, forgetting in his admiration for Sondelius and the health war his pride of the laboratory, he was thrown into a research problem.

### III

There was blackleg among the cattle in Crynssen County. The state veterinarian had been called and Dawson Hunziker vaccine had been injected, but the disease spread. Martin heard the farmers wailing. He noted that the injected cattle showed no inflammation nor rise in temperature. He was roused by a suspicion that the Hunziker vaccine had insufficient living organisms, and he went yelping on the trail of his hypothesis.

He obtained (by misrepresentations) a supply of the vaccine and tested it in his stuffy closet of a laboratory. He had to work out his own device for growing anaerobic cultures, but he had been trained by the Gottlieb who remarked, "Any man dat iss unable to build a filter out of toot'-picks, if he has to, would maybe better buy his results along with his fine equipment." Out of a large fruit-jar and a soldered pipe Martin made his apparatus.

When he was altogether sure that the vaccine did not contain living blackleg organisms, he was much more delighted than if he had found that good Mr. Dawson Hunziker was producing honest vaccine.

With no excuse and less encouragement he isolated blackleg organisms from sick cattle and prepared an attenuated vaccine of his own. It took much time. He did not neglect his patients but certainly he failed to appear in the stores, at the poker games. Leora and he dined on a sandwich every evening and hastened to the laboratory, to heat the cultures in the improvised water-bath, an ancient and leaky oatmeal-cooker with an alcohol lamp. The Martin who had been impatient of Hesselink was of endless patience as he watched his results. He whistled and hummed, and the hours from seven to midnight were a moment. Leora, frowning placidly, the tip of her tongue at the corner of her mouth, guarded the temperature like a good little watchdog.

After three efforts with two absurd failures, he had a vaccine which satisfied him, and he injected a stricken herd. The blackleg stopped, which was for Martin the end and the reward, and he turned his notes and supply of vaccine over to the state veterinarian. For others, it was not the end. The veterinarian

of the county denounced him for intruding on their right to save or kill cattle; the physicians hinted, "That's the kind of monkey-business that ruins the dignity of the profession. I tell you Arrowsmith's a medical nihilist and a notoriety-seeker, that's what he is. You mark my words, instead of his sticking to decent regular practice, you'll be hearing of his opening a quack sanitarium, one of these days!"

He commented to Leora:

"Dignity, hell! If I had my way I'd be doing research — oh, not this cold detached stuff of Gottlieb but really practical work — and then I'd have some fellow like Sondelius take my results and jam 'em down people's throats, and I'd make them and their cattle and their tabby-cats healthy whether they wanted to be or not, that's what I'd do!"

In this mood he read in his Minneapolis paper, between a half column on the marriage of the light middleweight champion and three lines devoted to the lynching of an I.W.W. agitator, the announcement:

*Gustave Sundelius, well-known authority on cholera prevention, will give an address on "Heroes of Health" at the University summer school next Friday evening.*

He ran into the house gloating, "Lee! Sondelius going to lecture in Minneapolis. I'm going! Come on! We'll hear him and have a bat and everything!"

"No, you run down by yourself. Be fine for you to get away from the town and the family and me for a while. I'll go down with you in the fall. Honestly. If I'm not in the way, maybe you can manage to have a good long talk with Dr. Sondelius."

"Fat chance! The big city physicians and the state health authorities will be standing around him ten deep. But I'm going."

#### IV

The prairie was hot, the wheat rattled in a weary breeze, the day-coach was gritty with cinders. Martin was cramped by the hours of slow riding. He drowsed and smoked and meditated. "I'm going to forget medicine and everything else," he vowed. "I'll go up and talk to somebody in the smoker and tell him I'm a shoe-salesman."

He did. Unfortunately his confidant happened to be a real shoe-salesman, with a large curiosity as to what firm Martin represented, and he returned to the day coach with a renewed sense of injury. When he reached Minneapolis, in mid-afternoon, he hastened to the University and besought a ticket to the Sondelius lecture before he had even found a hotel, though not before he had found the long glass of beer which he had been picturing for a hundred miles.

He had an informal but agreeable notion of spending his first evening of



freedom in dissipation. Somewhere he would meet a company of worthies who would succor him with laughter and talk and many drinks — not too many drinks, of course — and motor very rapidly to Lake Minnetonka for a moonlight swim. He began his search for the brethren by having a cocktail at a hotel bar and dinner in a Hennepin Avenue restaurant. Nobody looked at him, nobody seemed to desire a companion. He was lonely for Leora, and all his state of grace, all his earnest and simple-hearted devotion to carousal, degenerated into sleepiness.

As he turned and turned in his hotel bed he lamented, "And probably the Sondelius lecture will be rotten. Probably he's simply another Roscoe Geake."

v

In the hot night desultory students wandered up to the door of the lecture-hall, scanned the modest Sondelius poster, and ambled away. Martin was half minded to desert with them, and he went in sulkily. The hall was a third full of summer students and teachers, and men who might have been doctors or school-principals. He sat at the back, fanning with his straw hat, disliking the man with side-whiskers who shared the row with him, disapproving of Gustaf Sondelius, and as to himself having no good opinions whatever.

Then the room was charged with vitality. Down the central aisle, ineffectively attended by a small fussy person, thundered a man with a smile, a broad brow, and a strawpile of curly flaxen hair — a Newfoundland dog of a man. Martin sat straight. He was strengthened to endure even the depressing man with side-whiskers as Sondelius launched out, in a musical bellow with Swedish pronunciation and Swedish singsong:

"The medical profession can have but one desire: to destroy the medical profession. As for the laymen, they can be sure of but one thing: nine-tenths of what they know about health is not so, and with the other tenth they do nothing. As Butler shows in 'Erewhon' — the swine stole that idea from me, too, maybe thirty years before I ever got it — the only crime for w'ich we should hang people is having toobercoolosis."

"Umph!" grunted the studious audience, doubtful whether it was fitting to be amused, offended, bored, or edified.

— Sondelius was a roarer and a playboy, but he knew incantations. With him Martin watched the heroes of yellow fever, Reed, Agramonte, Carroll, and Lazear; with him he landed in a Mexican port stilled with the plague and famished beneath the virulent sun; with him rode up the mountain trails to a hill town rotted with typhus; with him, in crawling August, when babies were parched skeletons, fought an ice trust beneath the gilt and blunted sword of the law.

"That's what I want to do! Not just tinker at a lot of worn-out bodies but make a new world!" Martin hungered. "Gosh, I'd follow him through fire!

And the way he lays out the crapehangers that criticize public health results! If I could only manage to meet him and talk to him for a couple o' minutes —"

He lingered after the lecture. A dozen people surrounded Sondelius on the platform; a few shook hands; a few asked questions; a doctor worried, "But how about the danger of free clinics and all those things drifting into socialism?" Martin stood back till Sondelius had been deserted. A janitor was closing the windows, very firmly and suggestively. Sondelius looked about, and Martin would have sworn that the Great Man was lonely. He shook hands with him, and quaked:

"Sir, if you aren't due some place, I wonder if you'd like to come out and have a — a —"

Sondelius loomed over him in solar radiance and rumbled, "Have a drink? Well, I think maybe I would. How did the joke about the dog and his fleas go tonight? Do you think they liked it?"

"Oh, sure, you bet."

The warrior who had been telling of feeding five thousand Tatars, of receiving a degree from a Chinese university and refusing a decoration from quite a good Balkan king, looked affectionately on his band of one disciple and demanded, "Was it all right — was it? Did they like it? So hot tonight, and I been lecturing nine time a week — Des Moines, Fort Dodge, LaCrosse, Elgin, Joliet [but he pronounced it *Zho-lee-ay*] and — I forget. Was it all right? Did they like it?"

"Simply corking! Oh, they just ate it up! Honestly, I've never enjoyed anything so much in my life!"

The prophet crowed, "Come! I buy a drink. As a hygienist, I war on alcohol. In excessive quantities it is almost as bad as coffee or even ice cream soda. But as one who is fond of talking, I find a nice long whisky and soda a great solvent of human idiocy. Is there a cool place with some Pilsener here in Detroit — no; where am I tonight? — Minneapolis?"

"I understand there's a good beer-garden. And we can get the trolley right near here."

Sondelius stared at him. "Oh, I have a taxi waiting."

Martin was abashed by this luxury. In the taxi-cab he tried to think of the proper things to say to a celebrity.

"Tell me, Doctor, do they have city health boards in Europe?"

Sondelius ignored him. "Did you see that girl going by? What ankles! What shoulders! Is it good beer at the beer-garden? Have they any decent cognac? Do you know Courvoisier 1865 cognac? Oof! Lecturing! I swear I will give it up. And wearing dress clothes a night like this! You know, I mean all the crazy things I say in my lectures, but let us now forget being earnest, let us drink, let us sing 'Der Graf von Luxemburg,' let us detach exquisite girls from their escorts, let us discuss the joys of 'Die Meistersinger,' which only I appreciate!"

In the beer-garden the tremendous Sondelius discoursed of the Cosmos Club, Halle's investigation of infant mortality, the suitability of combining benedictine and apple-jack, Biarritz, Lord Haldane, the Doane-Buckley method of milk examination, George Gissing, and *homard thermidor*. Martin looked for a connection between Sondelius and himself, as one does with the notorious or with people met abroad. He might have said, "I think I met a man who knows you," or "I have had the pleasure of reading all your articles," but he fished with "Did you ever run into the two big men in my medical school — Winnemac — Dean Silva and Max Gottlieb?"

"Silva? I don't remember. But Gottlieb — you know him? Oh!" Sondelius waved his mighty arms. "The greatest! The spirit of science! I had the pleasure to talk with him at McGurk. He would not sit here bawling like me! He makes me like a circus clown! He takes all my statements about epidemiology and shows me I am a fool! Ho, ho, ho!" He beamed, and was off on a denunciation of high tariff.

Each topic had its suitable refreshment. Sondelius was a fantastic drinker, and zinc-lined. He mixed Pilsener, whisky, black coffee, and a liquid which the waiter asserted to be absinthe. "I should go to bed at midnight," he lamented, "but it is a cardinal sin to interrupt good talk. Yoost tempt me a little! I am an easy one to be tempted! But I must have five hours' sleep. Absolute! I lecture in — it's some place in Iowa — tomorrow evening. Now that I am past fifty, I cannot get along with three hours as I used to, and yet I have found so many new things that I want to talk about."

He was more eloquent than ever; then he was annoyed. A surly-looking man at the next table listened and peered, and laughed at them. Sondelius dropped from Haffkine's cholera serum to an irate:

"If that fellow stares at me some more, I am going over and kill him! I am a peaceful man, now that I am not so young, but I do not like starers. I will go and argue with him. I will yoost hit him a little!"

While the waiters came rushing, Sondelius charged the man, threatened him with enormous fists, then stopped, shook hands repeatedly, and brought him back to Martin.

"This is a born countryman of mine, from Gottenborg. He is a carpenter. Sit down, Nilsson, sit down and have a drink. Herumph! vai-ter!"

The carpenter was a socialist, a Swedish Seventh Day Adventist, a ferocious arguer, and fond of drinking aquavit. He denounced Sondelius as an aristocrat, he denounced Martin for his ignorance of economics, he denounced the waiter concerning the brandy; Sondelius and Martin and the waiter answered with vigor; and the conversation became admirable. Presently they were turned out of the beer-garden and the three of them crowded into the still waiting taxicab, which shook to their debating. Where they went, Martin could never trace. He may have dreamed the whole tale. Once they were apparently in a roadhouse on

a long street which must have been University Avenue; once in a saloon on Washington Avenue South, where three tramps were sleeping at the end of the bar; once in the carpenter's house, where an unexplained man made coffee for them.

Wherever they might be, they were at the same time in Moscow and Curaçao and Murwillumbah. The carpenter created communistic states, while Sondelius, proclaiming that he did not care whether he worked under socialism or an emperor so long as he could bully people into being well, annihilated tuberculosis and by dawn had cancer fleeing.

They parted at four, tearfully swearing to meet again, in Minnesota or Stockholm, in Rio or on the southern seas, and Martin started for Wheatsylvania to put an end to all this nonsense of allowing people to be ill.

And the great god Sondelius had slain Dean Silva, as Silva had slain Gottlieb, Gottlieb had slain "Encore" Edwards the playful chemist, Edwards had slain Doc Vickerson, and Vickerson had slain the minister's son who had a real trapeze in his barn.

## CHAPTER XVIII

Dr. Woestijne of Vanderheide's Grove acted in spare time as Superintendent of Health for Crynssen County, but the office was not well paid and it did not greatly interest him. When Martin burst in and offered to do all the work for half the pay, Woestijne accepted with benevolence, assuring him that it would have a great effect on his private practice.

It did. It almost ruined his private practice.

There was never an official appointment. Martin signed Woestijne's name (spelling it in various interesting ways, depending on how he felt) to papers, and the Board of County Commissioners recognized Martin's limited power, but the whole thing was probably illegal.

There was small science and considerably less heroism in his first furies as a health officer, but a great deal of irritation for his fellow-townsmen. He poked into yards, he denounced Mrs. Beeson for her reeking ash-barrels, Mr. Norblom for piling manure on the street, and the schoolboard for the school ventilation and lack of instruction in tooth-brushing. The citizens had formerly been agitated by his irreligion, his moral looseness, and his lack of local patriotism, but when they were prodded out of their comfortable and probably beneficial dirt, they exploded.

Martin was honest and appallingly earnest, but if he had the innocence of the dove he lacked the wisdom of the serpent. He did not make them understand his mission; he scarce tried to make them understand. His authority, as Woestijne's *alter ego*, was imposing on paper but feeble in action, and it was worthless against the stubbornness which he aroused.

He advanced from garbage-spying to a drama of infection.

The community at Delft had a typhoid epidemic which slackened and continually reappeared. The villagers believed that it came from a tribe of squatters six miles up the creek, and they considered lynching the offenders, as a practical protest and an interesting break in wheat-farming. When Martin insisted that in six miles the creek would purify any waste and that the squatters were probably not the cause, he was amply denounced.

"He's a fine one, he is, to go around blatting that we'd ought to have more health precautions! Here we go and show him where there's some hellhounds that ought to be shot, and them only Bohunks anyway, and he doesn't do a darn' thing but shoot a lot of hot air about germicidal effect or whatever the fool thing is," remarked Kaes, the wheat-buyer at the Delft elevator.

Flashing through the county, not neglecting but certainly not enlarging his own practice, Martin mapped every recent case of typhoid within five miles of Delft. He looked into milk-routes and grocery deliveries. He discovered that most of the cases had appeared after the visits of an itinerant seamstress, a spinster virtuous and almost painfully hygienic. She had had typhoid four years before.

"She's a chronic carrier of the bugs. She's got to be examined," he announced.

He found her sewing at the house of an old farmer-preacher.

With modest indignation she refused to be examined, and as he went away she could be heard weeping at the insult, while the preacher cursed him from the doorstep. He returned with the township police officer and had the seamstress arrested and confined in the segregation ward of the county poor-farm. In her discharges he found billions of typhoid bacilli.

The frail and decent body was not comfortable in the board-lined white-washed ward. She was shamed and frightened. She had always been well beloved, a gentle, shabby, bright-eyed spinster who brought presents to the babies, helped the overworked farmwives to cook dinner, and sang to the children in her thin sparrow voice. Martin was reviled for persecuting her. "He wouldn't dare pick on her if she wasn't so poor," they said, and they talked of a jail-delivery.

Martin fretted. He called upon the seamstress at the poor-farm, he tried to make her understand that there was no other place for her, he brought her magazines and sweets. But he was firm. She could not go free. He was convinced that she had caused at least one hundred cases of typhoid, with nine deaths.

The county derided him. Cause typhoid now, when she had been well for four years? The County Commissioners and the County Board of Health called Dr. Hesselink in from the next county. He agreed with Martin and his maps. Every meeting of the Commissioners was a battle now, and it was uncertain whether Martin would be ruined or throned.

Leora saved him and the seamstress. "Why not take up a collection to send

her off to some big hospital where she can be treated, or where they can keep her if she can't be cured?" said she.

The seamstress entered a sanitarium — and was amiably forgotten by everybody for the rest of her life — and his recent enemies said of Martin, "He's mighty smart, and right on the job." Hesselink drove over to inform him, "You did pretty well this time, Arrowsmith. Glad to see you're settling down to business."

Martin was slightly cocky, and immediately bounded after a fine new epidemic. He was so fortunate as to have a case of small-pox and several which he suspected. Some of these lay across the border in Mencken County, Hesselink's domain, and Hesselink laughed at him. "It's probably all chicken-pox, except your one case. Mighty rarely you get small-pox in summer," he chuckled, while Martin raged up and down the two counties, proclaiming the scourge, imploring everyone to be vaccinated, thundering, "There's going to be all hell let loose here in ten or fifteen days!"

But the United Brethren parson, who served chapels in Wheatsylvania and two other villages, was an anti-vaccinationist and he preached against it. The villages sided with him. Martin went from house to house, beseeching them, offering to treat them without charge. As he had never taught them to love him and follow him as a leader, they questioned, they argued long and easily on door-steps, they cackled that he was drunk. Though for weeks his strongest draft had been the acrid coffee of the countryside, they peeped one to another that he was drunk every night, that the United Brethren minister was about to expose him from the pulpit.

And ten dreadful days went by and fifteen, and all but the first case did prove to be chicken-pox. Hesselink gloated and the village roared and Martin was the butt of the land.

He had only a little resented their gossip about his wickedness, only in evenings of slow depression had he meditated upon fleeing from them, but at their laughter he was black furious.

Leora comforted him with cool hands. "It'll pass over," she said. But it did not pass.

By autumn it had become such a burlesque epic as peasants love through all the world. He had, they mirthfully related, declared that anybody who kept hogs would die of small-pox; he had been drunk for a week, and diagnosed everything from gall-stones to heart-burn as small-pox. They greeted him, with no meaning of offense in their snickering, "Got a pimple on my chin, Doc. What is 't — small-pox?"

More terrible than their rage is the people's laughter, and if it rends tyrants, with equal zest it pursues the saint and wise man and befouls their treasure.

When the neighborhood suddenly achieved a real epidemic of diphtheria and Martin shakily preached antitoxin, one-half of them remembered his fail-

ure to save Mary Novak and the other half clamored, "Oh, give us a rest! You got epidemics on the brain!" That a number of children quite adequately died did not make them relinquish their comic epic.

Then it was that Martin came home to Leora and said quietly, "I'm licked. I've got to get out. Nothing more I can do here. Take years before they'd trust me again. They're so damned *humorous*! I'm going to go get a real job — public health."

"I'm so glad! You're too good for them here. We'll find some big place where they'll appreciate your work."

"No, that's not fair. I've learned a little something. I've failed here. I've antagonized too many people. I didn't know how to handle them. We could stick it out, and I would, except that life is short and I think I'm a good worker in some ways. Been worrying about being a coward, about running away, 'turning my —' What is it? '— turning my hand from the plow.' I don't care now! By God, I know what I can do! Gottlieb saw it! And I want to get to work. On we go. All right?"

"Of course!"

## II

He had read in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that Gustaf Sondelius was giving a series of lectures at Harvard. He wrote asking whether he knew of a public health appointment. Sondelius answered, in a profane and blotty scrawl, that he remembered with joy their Minneapolis vacation, that he disagreed with Entwisle of Harvard about the nature of metathrombin, that there was an excellent Italian restaurant in Boston, and that he would inquire among his health-official friends as to a position.

Two days later he wrote that Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh, Director of Public Health in the city of Nautilus, Iowa, was looking for a second-in-command, and would probably be willing to send particulars.

Leora and Martin swooped on an almanac.

"Gosh! Sixty-nine thousand people in Nautilus! Against three hundred and sixty-six here — no, wait, it's three hundred and sixty-seven now, with that new baby of Pete Yeska's that the dirty swine called in Hesselink for. People! People that can talk! Theaters! Maybe concerts! Leora, we'll be like a pair of kids let loose from school!"

He telegraphed for details, to the enormous interest of the station agent, who was also telegraph operator.

The mimeographed form which was sent to him said that Dr. Pickerbaugh required an assistant who would be the only full-time medical officer besides Pickerbaugh himself, as the clinic and school doctors were private physicians working part-time. The assistant would be epidemiologist, bacteriologist, and manager of the office clerks, the nurses, and the lay inspectors of dairies and

sanitation. The salary would be twenty-five hundred dollars a year — against the fifteen or sixteen hundred Martin was making in Wheatsylvania.

Proper recommendations were desired.

Martin wrote to Sondelius, to Dad Silva, and to Max Gottlieb, now at the McGurk Institute in New York.

Dr. Pickerbaugh informed him, "I have received very pleasant letters from Dean Silva and Dr. Sondelius about you, but the letter from Dr. Gottlieb is quite remarkable. He says you have rare gifts as a laboratory man. I take great pleasure in offering you the appointment; kindly wire."

Not till then did Martin completely realize that he was leaving Wheatsylvania — the tedium of Bert Tozer's nagging — the spying of Pete Yeska and the Norbloms — the inevitability of turning, as so many unchanging times he had turned, south from that Leopolis road at the Two Mile Grove and following again that weary, flat, unbending trail — the superiority of Dr. Hesselink and the malice of Dr. Coughlin — the round which left him no time for his dusty laboratory — leaving it all for the achievement and splendor of the great city of Nautilus.

"Leora, we're going! We're really going!"

### III

Bert Tozer said:

"You know by golly there's folks that would call you a traitor, after all we've done for you, even if you did pay back the thousand, to let some other doc come in here and get all that influence away from the Family."

Ada Quist said:

"I guess if you ain't any too popular with the folks around here you'll have one fine time in a big city like Nautilus! Well Bert and me are going to get married next year and when you two swells make a failure of it I suppose we'll have to take care of you at our house when you come sneaking back do you think we could get your house at the same rent you paid for it oh Bert why couldn't we take Mart's office instead it would save money well I've always said since we were in school together you couldn't stand a decent regular life Ory."

Mr. Tozer said:

"I simply can't understand it, with everything going so nice. Why, you'd be making three-four thousand a year some day, if you just stuck to it. Haven't we tried to treat you nice? I don't like to have my little girl go away and leave me alone, now I'm getting on in years. And Bert gets so cranky with me and Mother, but you and Ory would always kind of listen to us. Can't you fix it somehow so you could stay?"

Pete Yeska said:

"Doc, you could of knocked me down with a feather when I heard you were going! Course you and me have scrapped about this drug business, but Lord!



I been kind of half thinking about coming around some time and offering you a partnership and let you run the drug end to suit yourself, and we could get the Buick agency, maybe, and work up a nice little business. I'm real sorry you're going to leave us. . . . Well, come back some day and we'll take a shot at the ducks, and have a good laugh about that bull you made over the small-pox. I never will forget that! I was saying to the old woman just the other day, when she had an ear-ache, 'Ain't got small-pox, have yuh, Bess!'"

Dr. Hesselink said:

"Doctor, what's this I hear? You're not going away? Why, you and I were just beginning to bring medical practice in this neck of the woods up to where it ought to be, so I drove over tonight — Huh! We panned you? Ye-es, I suppose we did, but that doesn't mean we didn't appreciate you. Small place like here or Groningen, you have to roast your neighbors to keep busy. Why, Doctor, I've been watching you develop from an unlicked cub to a real upstanding physician, and now you're going away — you don't know how I feel!"

Henry Novak said:

"Why, Doc, you ain't going to *leave* us? And we got a new baby coming, and I said to the woman, just the other day, 'It's a good thing we got a doctor that hands you out the truth and not all this guff we used to get from Doc Winter.'"

The wheat-buyer at Delft said:

"Doc, what's this I hear? You ain't going *away*? A fellow told me you was and I says to him, 'Don't be more of a damn' fool than the Lord meant you to be,' I says. But I got to worrying about it, and I drove over and — Doc, I fire off my mouth pretty easy, I guess. I was agin you in the typhoid epidemic, when you said that seamstress was carrying the sickness around, and then you showed me up good. Doc, if you'd like to be state senator, and if you'll stay — I got quite a little influence — believe me, I'll get out and work my shirt off for you!"

Alec Ingleblad said:

"You're a lucky guy!"

All the village was at the train when they left for Nautilus.

For a hundred autumn-blazing miles Martin mourned his neighbors. "I feel like getting off and going back. Didn't we used to have fun playing Five Hundred with the Fraziers! I hate to think of the kind of doctor they may get. I swear, if some quack settles there or if Woestijne neglects the health work again, I'll go back and run 'em both out of business! And be kind of fun to be state senator, some ways."

But as evening thickened and nothing in all the rushing world existed save the yellow Pintsch gas globes above them in the long car, they saw ahead of them great Nautilus, high honor and achievement, the making of a radiant model city and the praise of Sondelius — perhaps even of Max Gottlieb.

QUESTIONS

1. Identify Bert Tozer; Ory; Ada Quist; Dr. Coughlin.
2. What was the trouble with the Tozers as in-laws?
3. What did the following people have to do with Martin's reputation: the Norbloms; Pete Yeska; Novak; Dr. Winter; Agnes Ingleblad? What did the villagers first admire in "the Young Doc"?
4. Characterize Leora. Is she a good doctor's wife?
5. What did Martin learn about himself as a result of talking to Dr. Hesselink? What did he do about it?
6. What is Martin's chief interest in medicine? When is this revealed?
7. In what state did Martin set up practice?
8. What crusade did Sondelius preach? What opposition did Martin encounter as a disciple of Sondelius?
9. Mention several examples of satire on the medical profession. Do you consider the author's criticism fair?
10. Why is Martin in conflict with his small town environment? Is he at fault, or are the townspeople chiefly to blame?

*James Michener, born in New York and educated in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, and at Swarthmore College, achieved fame and fortune through his books about the South Seas, especially his Tales of the South Pacific (Pulitzer Prize, 1947), which was adapted into the successful musical South Pacific. Before his enlistment in the Navy in World War II, leading to service in the Solomon Islands, Michener had satisfied his "itching foot" by bumming across the United States, acting on the Chautauqua circuit, and later studying and teaching at a number of colleges and working as a textbook editor. The Bridges at Toko-ri, "a vivid, stirring piece of semi-journalistic fiction," was praised especially for the "sharp individuality" of its secondary characters. Other books of Michener's about the Pacific are Return to Paradise (1951) and Rascals in Paradise (1957).*

The sea was bitter cold. From the vast empty plains of Siberia howling winds roared down to lash the mountains of Korea, where American soldiers lost on patrol froze into stiff and awkward forms. Then with furious intensity the arctic wind swept out to sea, freezing even the salt spray that leaped into the air from crests of falling waves.

Through these turbulent seas, not far from the trenches of Korea, plowed a considerable formation of American warships. A battleship and two cruisers, accompanied by fourteen destroyers to shield against Russian submarines, held steady course as their icy decks rose and fell and shivered in the gale. They were the ships of Task Force 77 and they had been sent to destroy the communist-held bridges at Toko-ri.

Toward the center of this powerful assembly rode two fast carriers, the cause of the task force and its mighty arm. Their massive decks pitched at crazy angles, which for the present made take-offs or landings impossible. Their planes stood useless, huddled together in the wind, lashed down by steel cables.

It was strange, and in some perverse way resolutely American, that these two carriers wallowing in the dusk bore names which memorialized not stirring victories but humiliating defeats, as if by thus publishing her indifference to catastrophe and her willingness to surmount it, the United States were defying her enemies. To the east, and farther out to sea, rode the *Hornet*, whose predecessor of that name had absorbed a multitude of Japanese bombs and torpedoes, going down off Guadalcanal, while the inboard carrier, the *Savo*, would forever remind the navy of its most shameful defeat in history, when four cruisers sank helpless at Savo Island, caught sleeping by the audacious Japanese.

Now, as night approached the freezing task force, the bull horn on the *Savo*

"Sea" from *The Bridges at Toko-ri* by James A. Michener, copyright 1953 by James A. Michener.

rasped out, "Prepare to launch aircraft!" And it was obvious from the way her deck was arranged that the carrier already had some planes in the skies over Korea, and every man who watched the heaving sea wondered how those planes could possibly get back aboard.

The bull horn, ignoring such problems, roared, "Prepare to launch helicopter!" and although the deck pitched in abandon, rotors began to turn, slowly at first and then with lumbering speed.

Now the great carrier struck a sea trough and slid away, her deck lurching, but relentlessly the bull horn cried, "Move jets into position for launching," and the catapult crew, fighting for footing on the sliding deck, sprang swiftly into action, inching two heavy Banshees onto the catapults, taking painful care not to allow the jets to get rolling, lest they plunge overboard with some sudden shifting of the deck.

"Start jet engines," roared the insistent bull horn.

The doctor, who had to be on deck in case of crash, looked at the heaving sea and yelled to the crane operator, "They may launch these jets, but they'll never get 'em back aboard."

The craneman looked down from his giant machine, which could lift a burning plane and toss it into the sea, and shouted, "Maybe they're planning to spend the night at some air force field in Korea. Along with the ones that are already up."

But at this instant all ships of the task force swung in tight circles and headed away from the open sea, straight for the nearby cliffs of Korea, and when the turn was completed, the deck of the *Savo* mysteriously stabilized. The effects of wind and sea neutralized each other, and planes returning from the bombardment of Korea now had a safe place to land.

But before they could do so the bull horn cried eerily into the dusk, "Launch helicopter!" and the crazy bird, its two rotors spinning so slowly the blades could be seen, stumbled into the air, and the horn cried, "Launch jets!"

Then, as the great carrier rode serenely amid the storms, the catapult officer whirled one finger above his head and a tremendous, almost unbearable roar arose and twin blasts of heat leaped from each Banshee, burning the icy air more than a hundred feet aft. Now the officer whirled two fingers and the roar increased and white heat scorched the deck of the carrier and the twin engines whipped to a meaningless speed of 13,000 revolutions a minute and the Banshee pilot, forcing his head back against a cushion, saluted and the catapult officer's right hand whipped down and the catapult fired.

Nine tons of jet aircraft were swept down the deck at a speed of more than 135 miles an hour. Within less than 150 feet the immense Banshee was airborne, and by the time it reached the forward edge of the carrier, it was headed toward its mission. Four times the catapults fired and four times heavy jets leaped into the darkening sky and headed for the coastline of Korea.

As soon as they had left, the bull horn wailed, "Respot planes. On the double. We must recover the Korea jets immediately."

When this announcement was made thirty old-fashioned propeller planes were already lashed down on the after part of the flight deck in precisely that area needed for landing the jets which now appeared overhead. The prop planes had been stowed there to permit catapult take-offs, and now they must be moved forward. So on the wooden deck, swept by icy winds, hundreds of young men in varicolored uniforms sped to the task of clearing the landing space. Men in green stowed the catapult gear so that no remnant of the powerful machine was visible. Other men in yellow leaped upon the deck and began to indicate the course each plane must follow on its way to forward stowage. Dozens of tough young men in blue leaned their shoulders against the planes, swung them laboriously into position and pushed them slowly into the biting wind. In blazing red uniforms other men checked guns or fueled empty craft while plane captains in brown sat in cockpits and worked the brakes to prevent accident. Darting about through the milling, pushing, shouting deck hands three-wheeled jeeps of vivid yellow and lumbering tractors in somber gray hurried to their jobs, while over all towered the mighty arms of the enormous black and sinister crane. Behind it lurked two weird men in fantastic suits of ashen gray asbestos, their faces peering from huge glassine boxes, ready to save the pilot if a crashed plane should burn, while in back of them, clothed in snowy white, the doctor waited, for death was always close upon the carrier deck.

So in an age of flight, in the jet age of incredible speed, these men pushed and pulled and slipped upon the icy deck and ordered the heavy planes with their bare hands. Upon trailing edges burdened with ice they pushed, their faces open to the freezing wind, their eyes heavy with frozen salt and the knuckles of their hands covered long since with protecting scars. And as they moved, their bright colors formed the pattern of a dance and after they had swarmed upon the deck for some minutes the *Savo* was transformed and from the lowering shadows the jets prepared to land.

This intricate operation was guided by one man. From the admiral's country he had directed the task force to run toward the communist coast. The last four jets had been dispatched at his command. He had placed the ships so that the operations of one would not trespass the allotted space of the other, and it was his responsibility to see that his carriers faced the wind in such position that smoke trailed off to one side rather than directly aft and into the faces of incoming pilots. Now he stood upon his bridge and watched the mountains of Korea moving perilously close.

Admiral George Tarrant was a tall narrow man with a sharp face that was sour and withdrawing like those of his Maine ancestors. Battle-wizened, he had fought the Japanese with his own carrier at Saipan, at Iwo Jima and at Okinawa,

where his austere and lonely presence had brought almost as much terror to his own fliers as it had to the enemy.

He was known through the navy as George the Tyrant, and any aviator who wanted to fetch a big laugh would grab a saucer in his left hand, a coffee cup in his right, lean back in his chair and survey the audience sourly, snorting, "Rubbish." Then the mimic would stare piercingly at some one pilot, jab the coffee cup at him and growl, "You, son. What do you think?"

But men who served with Tarrant soon forgot his tyranny and remembered his fantastic skill in operating a task force. His men said flatly, "He can do it better than anyone else in the world." He knew the motion of the sea and could estimate whether a morning swell would rise to prevent recovery of afternoon planes or subside so that even jets could land freely. He was able to guess when new gales of bitter Siberian air would rush the line of snowstorms out to sea and when the snow would come creeping softly back and throw a blizzard about the task force as it slept at night. And he had a most curious ability to foresee what might trouble the tin-can sailors serving in the remote destroyers.

He fought upon the surface of the sea and in the sky. He sent his planes inland to support ground troops or far out to sea to spot Russian submarines. His was the most complex combat command of which one man's mind was capable and on him alone depended decisions of the gravest moment.

For example, the position he was now in, with mountains closing down upon him, was his responsibility. Early that morning his aerologist had warned, "Wind's coming up, sir. You might run out of ocean by late afternoon."

He studied the charts and growled, "We'll make it."

Now his navigator warned, "We can't hold this course more than sixteen minutes, sir." The young officer looked at the looming coastline as if to add, "After that we'll have to turn back and abandon the planes."

"We'll make it," Tarrant grumbled as his ships plowed resolutely on toward the crucial hundred fathom curve which he dare not penetrate for fear of shoals, mines and submarines. But he turned his back upon this problem, for he could do nothing about it now. Instead, he checked to be sure the *Savo's* deck was ready and in doing so he saw something which reassured him. Far aft, standing upon a tiny platform that jutted out over the side of the carrier, stood a hulking giant, muffled in fur and holding two landing-signal paddles in his huge hands. It was Beer Barrel, and if any man could bring jets surely and swiftly home, it was Beer Barrel.

He was an enormous man, six feet three, more than 250 pounds, and his heavy suit, stitched with strips of fluorescent cloth to make his arms and legs easier to read, added to his bulk. He was a farmer from Texas who before the perilous days of 1943 had never seen the ocean, but he possessed a fabulous ability to sense the motion of the sea and what position the carrier deck would take. He could judge the speed of jets as they whirled down upon him, but

most of all he could imagine himself in the cockpit of every incoming plane and he seemed to know what tired and jittery pilots would do next and he saved their lives. He was a fearfully bad naval officer and in some ways a disgrace to his uniform, but everyone felt better when he came aboard a carrier, for he could do one thing. He could land planes.

He could reach out with his great hands and bring them safely home the way falconers used to bring back birds they loved. In the Pentagon they knew he broke rules and smuggled beer aboard each ship he served upon. Carrier captains knew it, and even Admiral Tarrant, who was a terror on navy rules, looked the other way when Beer Barrel staggered back after each drunken liberty, lugging his two ridiculous golf bags. The huge Texan had never once played golf and the two clubs sticking out were dummies. Once a deck hand, fearful that drunken Beer Barrel might slide back down the gangplank, had grabbed one of the outsize golf bags to help, but the surprising weight of it had crumpled him to the deck. Beer Barrel, barely able to heft the bag himself, had got it onto his massive shoulder, whispering beerily to the boy, "Thanks, Junior, but this is man's work." And he had carried the bags full of beer into his quarters.

For he believed that if he had a can of cold beer in his belly it formed a kind of gyroscope which made him unusually sensitive to the sea and that when this beer sloshed about it harmonized with the elements and he became one with the sea and the sky and the heaving deck and the heart of the incoming pilot.

"Land jets!" moaned the bull horn.

"Let's hear the checks," Beer Barrel said to his spotters, staring aft to catch the first jet as it made its 180° turn for the cross leg and the sharp final turn into the landing run. Now the jet appeared and Beer Barrel thought, "They're always pretty comin' home at night."

"All down!" the first watcher cried as he checked the wheels, the flaps and the stout hook which now dangled lower than the wheels.

"All down," Beer Barrel echoed unemotionally.

"Clear deck!" the second watcher shouted as he checked the nylon barriers and the thirteen heavy steel wires riding a few inches off the deck, waiting to engage the hook.

"Clear deck," Beer Barrel grunted phlegmatically.

He extended his paddles out sideways from his shoulders, standing like an imperturbable rock, and willed the plane onto the deck. "Come on, Junior," he growled. "Keep your nose up so's your hook'll catch. Good boy!" Satisfied that all was well, he snapped his right paddle dramatically across his heart and dropped his left arm as if it had been severed clean away from his body. Instantly the jet pilot cut his flaming speed and slammed his Banshee onto the deck. With violent grasp the protruding hook engaged one of the slightly elevated wires and dragged the massive plane to a shuddering stop.

Beer Barrel, watching from his platform, called to the clerk who kept records

on each plane, "1593. Junior done real good. Number three wire." Never did Beer Barrel feel so content, not even when guzzling lager, as when one of his boys caught number three wire. "Heaven," he explained once, "is where everybody gets number three wire. Hell is where they fly wrong and catch number thirteen and crash into the barrier and burn. And every one of you's goin' straight to hell if you don't follow me better."

From his own bridge, Admiral Tarrant watched the jets come home. In his life he had seen many fine and stirring things: his wife at the altar, Japanese battleships going down, ducks rising from Virginia marshes and his sons in uniform. But nothing he knew surpassed the sight of Beer Barrel bringing home the jets at dusk.

There always came that exquisite moment of human judgment when one man — a man standing alone on the remotest corner of the ship, lashed by foul wind and storm — had to decide that the jet roaring down upon him could make it. This solitary man had to judge the speed and height and the pitching of the deck and the wallowing of the sea and the oddities of this particular pilot and those additional imponderables that no man can explain. Then, at the last screaming second he had to make his decision and flash it to the pilot. He had only two choices. He could land the plane and risk the life of the pilot and the plane and the ship if he had judged wrong. Or he could wave-off and delay his decision until next time around. But he could defer his job to no one. It was his, and if he did judge wrong, carnage on the carrier deck could be fearful. That was why Admiral Tarrant never bothered about the bags of beer.

On they came, the slim and beautiful jets. As they roared upwind the admiral could see their stacks flaming. When they made their far turn and roared downwind he could see the pilots as human beings, tensed up and ready for the landing that was never twice the same. Finally, when these mighty jets hit the deck they weighed well over seven tons and their speed exceeded 135 miles an hour, yet within 120 feet they were completely stopped and this miracle was accomplished in several ways. First, Tarrant kept his carriers headed into the wind, which on this day stormed in at nearly 40 miles an hour, which cut the plane's relative speed to about 95 miles. Then, too, the carrier was running away from the plane at 11 miles an hour, which further cut the plane's speed to 84, and it was this actual speed that the wires had to arrest. They did so with brutal strength, but should they miss, two slim nylon barriers waited to drag the plane onto the deck and chop its impetus, halting it so that it could not proceed forward to damage other planes. And finally, should a runaway jet miss both the wires and the barriers, it would plunge into a stout nylon barricade which would entwine itself about the wings and wheels and tear the jet apart as if it were a helpless insect.

But it was Beer Barrel's job to see that the barriers and the barricade were not needed and he would shout curses at his pilots and cry, "Don't fly the deck,



Junior. Don't fly the sea. Fly me." An air force colonel watching Beer Barrel land jets exclaimed, "Why, it isn't a landing at all! It's a controlled crash." And the big Texan replied in his beery voice, "Difference is that when I crash 'em they're safe in the arms of God."

Now he brought in three more, swiftly and surely, and Admiral Tarrant, watching the looming mountains of Korea as they moved in upon his ships, muttered, "Well, we'll make it again."

But as he said these words his squawk box sounded, and from deep within the *Savo* the combat intelligence director reported coolly, "1591 has been hit. Serious damage. May have to ditch."

"What's his position?"

"Thirty-five miles away."

"Who's with him?"

"His wingman, 1592."

"Direct him to come on in and attempt landing."

The squawk box clicked off and Admiral Tarrant looked straight ahead at the looming coast. Long ago he had learned never to panic, but he had trained himself to look at situations in their gloomiest aspects so as to be prepared for ill turns of luck. "If this jet limps in we may have to hold this course for ten or fifteen more minutes. Well, we probably can do it."

He studied the radar screen to estimate his probable position in fifteen minutes. "Too close," he muttered. Then into the squawk box which led to the air officer of the *Savo* he said, "Recovery operations must end in ten minutes. Get all planes aboard."

"The admiral knows there's one in trouble?"

"Yes. I've ordered him to try to land."

"Yes, sir."

The bull horn sounded. "All hands. We must stop operations within ten minutes. Get those barriers cleared faster. Bring the planes in faster."

The telephone talker at the landing platform told Beer Barrel, "We got to get 'em all aboard in ten minutes."

"What's a matter?" Beer Barrel growled. "Admiral running hisself out of ocean?"

"Looks like it," the talker said.

"You tell him to get the planes up here and I'll get 'em aboard."

So the nineteen dark ships of the task force sped on toward the coastline and suddenly the squawk box rasped, "Admiral, 1591 says he will have to ditch."

"Can he ditch near the destroyers?"

"Negative."

"Is his wingman still with him?"

"Affirmative."

"How much fuel?"

"Six hundred pounds."

"Have you a fix on their positions?"

"Affirmative."

"Dispatch helicopter and tell wingman to land immediately."

There was a long silence and the voice said, "Wingman 1592 requests permission stay with downed plane till copter arrives."

The admiral was now faced with a decision no man should have to make. If the wingman stayed on, he would surely run out of fuel and lose his own plane and probably his life as well. But to command him to leave a downed companion was inhuman and any pilot aboard the *Savo* would prefer to risk his own life and his plane rather than to leave a man adrift in the freezing sea before the helicopter had spotted him.

For in the seas off Korea a downed airman had twenty minutes to live. That was all. The water was so bitterly cold that within five minutes the hands were frozen and the face. In twelve minutes of immersion in these fearful waters the arms became unable to function and by the twentieth minute the pilot was frozen to death.

The decision could not be deferred, for the squawk box repeated, "Wingman 1592 requests permission to stay."

The admiral asked, "What is the absolute minimum of gas with which the wingman can make a straight-in landing?"

There was a moment's computation. "Assuming he finds the carrier promptly, about four hundred pounds."

"Tell him to stay with the downed man . . ."

The voice interrupted, "Admiral, 1591 has just ditched. Wingman says the plane sank immediately."

There was a moment's silence and the admiral asked, "Where's the helicopter?"

"About three more minutes away from the ditching."

"Advise the helicopter . . ."

"Admiral, the wingman reports downed pilot afloat."

"Tell the wingman to orbit until helicopter arrives. Then back for a straight-in landing."

The bull horn echoed in the gathering dusk and mournful sounds spread over the flight deck, speaking of disaster. "Get those last two jets down immediately. Then prepare for emergency straight-in landing. A plane has been lost at sea. Wingman coming in short of fuel."

For a moment the many-colored figures stopped their furious motions. The frozen hands stopped pushing jets and the yellow jeeps stayed where they were. No matter how often you heard the news it always stopped you. No matter how frozen your face was, the bull horn made you a little bit colder. And far out to sea, in a buffeted helicopter, two enlisted men were coldest of all.

At the controls was Mike Forney, a tough twenty-seven-year-old Irishman from Chicago. In a navy where enlisted men hadn't much chance of flying, Mike had made it. He had bullied his way through to flight school and his arrival aboard his first ship, the *Savo*, would be remembered as long as the ship stayed afloat. It was March 17 when he flew his copter onto the flight deck, wearing an opera hat painted green, a Baron von Richthofen scarf of kelly green, and a clay pipe jammed into his big teeth. He had his earphones wrapped around the back of his neck and when the captain of the *Savo* started to chew him out Forney said, "When I appear anywhere I want the regular pilots to know it, because if they listen to me, I'll save 'em." Now, as he sped toward the ditched pilot, he was wearing his green stovepipe and his World War I kelly green scarf, for he had found that when those astonishing symbols appeared at a scene of catastrophe everyone relaxed, and he had already saved three pilots.

But the man flying directly behind Mike Forney's hat wasn't relaxed. Nestor Gamidge, in charge of the actual rescue gear, was a sad-faced inconsequential young man from Kentucky, where his unmarried schoolteacher mother had named him Nestor after the wisest man in history, hoping that he would justify everything. But Nestor had not lived up to his name and was in fact rather stupid, yet, as the copter flew low over the bitter waves to find the ditched plane, he was bright enough to know that if anyone were to save the airman pitching about in the freezing water below it would be he. In this spot the admiral didn't count nor the wingman who was orbiting upstairs nor even Mike Forney. In a few minutes he would lean out of the helicopter and lower a steel hoisting sling for the pilot to climb into. But from cold experience he knew that the man below would probably be too frozen even to lift his arms, so he, Nestor Gamidge, who hated the sea and who was dragged into the navy by his draft board, would have to jump into the icy waves and try to shove the inert body of the pilot into the sling. And if he failed — if his own hands froze before he could accomplish this — the pilot must die. That's why they gave Nestor the job. He was dumb and he was undersized but he was strong.

"I see him," Nestor said.

Mike immediately called to the wingman: "1592. Go on home. This is Mike Forney and everything's under control."

— "Mike!" the wingman called. "Save that guy."

"We always save 'em. Scram."

"That guy down there is Harry Brubaker. The one whose wife and kids are waiting for him in Yokosuka. But he don't know it. Save him!"

Mike said to Nestor, "You hear that? He's the one whose wife and kids came out to surprise him."

"He looks froze," Nestor said, lowering the sling.

Suddenly Mike's voice lost its brashness. "Nestor," he said quietly, "if you have to jump in . . . I'll stay here till the other copter gets you."

In dismay, Nestor watched the sling drift past the downed pilot and saw that the man was too frozen to catch hold. So he hauled the sling back up and said, "I'll have to go down."

Voluntarily, he fastened the sling about him and dropped into the icy waves.

"Am I glad to see you!" the pilot cried.

"He's OK," Nestor signaled.

"Lash him in," Mike signaled back.

"Is that Mike? With the green hat?"

"Yep."

"My hands won't . . ."

They tried four times to do so simple a thing as force the sling down over the pilot's head and arms but the enormous weight of watersoaked clothing made him an inert lump. There was a sickening moment when Nestor thought he might fail. Then, with desperate effort, he jammed his right foot into the pilot's back and shoved. The sling caught.

Nestor lashed it fast and signaled Mike to haul away. Slowly the pilot was pulled clear of the clutching sea and was borne aloft. Nestor, wallowing below, thought, "There goes another."

Then he was alone. On the bosom of the great sea he was alone and unless the second helicopter arrived immediately, he would die. Already, overpowering cold tore at the seams of his clothing and crept in to get him. He could feel it numb his powerful hands and attack his strong legs. It was the engulfing sea, the icy and deadly sea that he despised and he was deep into it and his arms were growing heavy.

Then, out of the gathering darkness, came the *Hornet's* copter.

So Mike called the *Savo* and reported, "Two copters comin' home with two frozen mackerel."

"What was that?" the *Savo* asked gruffly.

"What I said," Mike replied, and the two whirly birds headed for home, each dangling below it the freezing body of a man too stiff to crawl inside.

Meanwhile Admiral Tarrant was faced with a new problem. The downed pilot had been rescued but the incoming wingman had fuel sufficient for only one pass, and if that pass were waved off the pilot would have to crash land into the sea and hope for a destroyer pickup, unless one of the copters could find him in the gathering dusk.

But far more important than the fate of one Banshee were the nineteen ships of the task force which were now closing the hundred fathom mark. For them to proceed farther would be to invite the most serious trouble. Therefore the admiral judged that he had at most two minutes more on course, after which he would be forced to run with the wind, and then no jet could land, for the combined speed of jet and wind would be more than 175 miles, which would tear out any landing hook and probably the barriers as well. But the same motive

that had impelled the wingman to stay at the scene of the crash, the motive that forced Nestor Gamidge to plunge into the icy sea, was at work upon the admiral and he said, "We'll hold the wind a little longer. Move a little closer to shore."

Nevertheless, he directed the four destroyers on the forward edge of the screen to turn back toward the open sea, and he checked them on the radar as they moved off. For the life of one pilot he was willing to gamble his command that there were no mines and that Russia had no submarines lurking between him and the shore.

"1592 approaching," the squawk box rasped.

"Warn him to come straight in."

Outside the bull horn growled, "Prepare to land last jet, straight in."

Now it was the lead cruiser's turn to leave the formation but the *Savo* rode solemnly on, lingering to catch this last plane. On the landing platform Beer Barrel's watcher cried, "Hook down, wheels down. Can't see flaps."

The telephone talker shouted, "Pilot reports his flaps down."

"All down," Beer Barrel droned.

"Clear deck!"

"Clear deck."

Now even the carrier *Hornet* turned away from the hundred fathom line and steamed parallel to it while the jet bore in low across her path. Beer Barrel, on his wooden platform, watched it come straight and low and slowing down.

"Don't watch the sea, Junior," he chanted. "Watch me. Hit me in the kisser with your left wing tank and you'll be all right, Junior." His massive arms were outstretched with the paddles parallel to the deck and the jet screamed in, trying to adjust its altitude to the shifting carrier's.

"Don't fly the deck, Junior!" roared Beer Barrel and for one fearful instant it looked as if the onrushing jet had put itself too high. In that millionth of a second Beer Barrel thought he would have to wave the plane off but then his judgment cried that there was a chance the plane could make it. So Beer Barrel shouted. "Keep comin', Junior!" and at the last moment he whipped the right paddle across his heart and dropped the left.

The plane was indeed high and for one devastating moment seemed to be floating down the deck and into the parked jets. Then, when a crash seemed inevitable, it settled fast and caught number nine. The jet screamed ahead and finally stopped with its slim nose peering into the webs of the barrier.

"You fly real good, Junior," Beer Barrel said, tucking the paddles under his arm, but when the pilot climbed down his face was ashen and he shouted, "They rescue Brubaker?"

"They got him."

The pilot seemed to slump and his plane captain ran up and caught him by the arm and led him to the ladder, but as they reached for the first step they

stumbled and pitched forward, so swift was the *Savo's* groaning turn back out to sea.

As soon as the copters appeared with little Gamidge and the unconscious body of the pilot dangling through the icy air, Admiral Tarrant sent his personal aide down to sick bay to tell the helicopter men he would like to see them after the flight doctor had taken care of them. In a few minutes they arrived in flag plot, Forney in trim aviator's flight jacket and Gamidge in a fatigue suit some sizes too large.

The admiral poured them coffee and said, "Sit down." Forney grabbed the comfortable corner of the leather davenport on which the admiral slept when he did not wish to leave this darkened room of radar screens, repeating compasses and charts, but Gamidge fumbled about until the admiral indicated where he was to sit. Pointing at the squat Kentuckian with his coffee cup, the admiral said, "It must have been cold in the water."

"It was!" Forney assured him. "Bitter."

"I hope the doctor gave you something to warm you up."

"Nestor's too young to drink," Forney said, "but I had some."

"You weren't in the water."

"No, sir, but I had the canopy open."

"How's the pilot?"

"When me and Gamidge go out for them we bring them back in good shape."

"They tell me he wasn't able to climb into the sling."

"That pilot was a real man, sir. Couldn't move his hands or arms but he never whimpered."

"Because he fainted," Nestor explained.

The admiral invariably insisted upon interviewing all men who did outstanding work and now he pointed his cup at Gamidge again. "Son, do you know any way we could improve the rescue sling?"

The little Kentuckian thought a long time and then said slowly, "Nope. If their hands freeze somebody's got to go into the water to get them."

The admiral put his cup down and said brusquely, "Keep bringing them back. Navy's proud of men like you."

"Yes, sir!" Forney said. He always pronounced *sir* with an insinuating leer, as if he wished to put commissioned officers at ease. Then he added, "There is one thing we could do to make the chopper better."

"What's that?"

"I got to operate that sling quicker. Because it seems like Nestor goes into the sea almost every time."

"You know what changes to make?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then make them."

The two enlisted men thanked the admiral and as they went down the ladder Tarrant heard Forney ask, "Nestor, why'd you stand there with your mouth shut, like a moron? Suppose he is a mean old bastard. No reason to be scared of him."

"By the way," the admiral called. "Who was the pilot?"

"Brubaker, sir," Forney cried, unabashed.

The name struck Tarrant with visible force. He backed into the darkened flag plot and steadied himself for a moment. "Brubaker!" he repeated quietly. "How strange that it should have been Brubaker!"

Shaken, he slumped onto the leather davenport and reached for some papers which had been delivered aboard ship by dispatch plane that afternoon. "Brubaker!" He scanned the papers and called sick bay.

"Doctor," he asked, "any chance I could talk with Brubaker?"

A crisp voice snapped back, "Admiral, you know the man's suffered exposure."

"I know that, but there's an urgent matter and I thought that when he found himself in good shape . . ." He left it at that.

Then he thought of Brubaker, a twenty-nine-year-old civilian who had been called back into service against his will. At the start of the cruise he had been something of a problem, griping ceaselessly about the raw deal the navy had given him, but gradually he had become one of the two or three finest pilots. He still griped, he still damned the navy, but he did his job. The admiral respected men like that.

But Brubaker had a special significance, for on recent cruises Admiral Tarrant had adopted the trick of selecting some young man of about the age and rank his older son would have attained had the Japs' not shot him down while he was trying to launch a navy fighter plane on the morning of Pearl Harbor. Tarrant found satisfaction in watching the behavior of such pilots, for they added meaning to his otherwise lonely life. But in the case of Harry Brubaker the trick had come close to reality. The Banshee pilot had the quick temper of his sons, the abiding resentments, the courage.

Admiral Tarrant therefore desperately wanted to leave flag plot and go down into the ship and talk with Brubaker, but custom of the sea forbade this, for the captain of any ship must be supreme upon that ship, and even the flag admiral who chances to make his quarters aboard is a guest. So Admiral Tarrant was cooped up in flag plot, a tiny bedroom and a special bridge reserved for his use. That was his country and there he must stay.

There was a knock upon the door and the aide said, "Sir, it's Brubaker!"

The good-looking young man who stuck his head in was obviously a civilian. He wore two big bathrobes and heavy woolen socks but even if he had worn dress uniform he would have been a civilian. He was a little overweight, his hair was a bit too long and he wasn't scared enough of the admiral. Indelibly,

he was a young lawyer from Denver, Colorado, and the quicker he got out of the navy and back into a courtroom, the happier he'd be.

"You can scram now," he told the medical corpsman who had brought him up to the admiral's country.

"Come in, Brubaker," the admiral said stiffly. "Cup of coffee?" As he reached for the cup Brubaker didn't exactly stand at attention but the admiral said quickly, "Sit down, son. How's the Banshee take the water?"

"All right, if you fly her in."

"You keep the tail down?"

"I tried to. But as you approach the water every inclination is to land nose first. Then from way back in the past I remembered an October night when our family was burning leaves and at the end my mother pitched a bucket of water on the bonfire. I can still recall the ugly smell. Came back to me tonight. I said, 'If I let water get into the engines I'll smell it again.' So I edged the plane lower and lower. Kept the engines up and the tail way down. When the nose finally hit I was nearly stopped. But I was right. There was that same ugly smell."

"How was the helicopter?"

"That kid in back deserves a medal."

"They handle the rescue OK?"

"This man Forney. When I looked up and saw that crazy hat I knew I had it knocked."

Admiral Tarrant took a deep gulp of coffee and studied Brubaker across the rim of his cup. He knew he oughtn't to discuss this next point with a junior officer but he had to talk with someone. "You say the green hat gave you a little extra fight?"

"You're scared. Then you see an opera hat coming at you out of nowhere. You relax."

"I would. Forney was in here a few minutes ago. Put me right at ease. Implied I was doing a fair job. You've got to respect a character like that. But the funny thing . . ." He looked into his cup and said casually, "Captain of the ship's going to get rid of Forney. Says the hat's an outrage."

Brubaker knew the admiral was out of line so he didn't want to press for more details but he did say, "The pilots'd be unhappy."

The admiral, far back in his corner of the davenport, studied the bundled-up young man and jabbed his coffee cup at him. "Harry, you're one of the finest pilots we have. You go in low, you do the job."

Brubaker grinned. He had a generous mouth and even teeth. His grin was attractive. "From you, sir, I appreciate that."

"Then why don't you stay in the navy? Great future here for you."

The grin vanished. "You know what I think of the navy, sir."

"Still bitter?"

"Still. I was unattached. The organized units were drawing pay. They were



left home. I was called. Sometimes I'm so bitter I could bitch up the works on purpose."

"Why don't you?" Tarrant asked evenly.

"You know why I don't, sir. The catapult fires. There's that terrific moment and you're out front. On your way to Korea. So you say, 'What the heck? I'm here. Might as well do the job.'"

"Exactly. The President once rebuked me publicly. I'd had that big fight with the battleship boys because they didn't think aviation was important. Then the brawl with the air force who thought it too important. I know I'll never get promoted again. But you're here and you do the job."

"It would be easier to take if people back home were helping. But in Denver nobody even knew there was a war except my wife. Nobody supports this war."

At the mention of Brubaker's wife the admiral unconsciously reached for the file of papers, but he stopped because what the young pilot said interested him. "Every war's the wrong one," he said. "Could anything have been stupider than choosing Guadalcanal for a battleground? And look at us today!" With his cup he indicated on the chart where the permanent snow line, heavy with blizzards and sleet, hung a few miles to the east, while to the west the mountains of Korea hemmed in the ships. "Imagine the United States navy tied down to a few square miles of ocean. The marines are worse. Dug into permanent trenches. And the poor air force is the most misused of all. Bombers flying close air support. Militarily this war is a tragedy."

"Then why don't we pull out?" Harry asked bluntly.

Admiral Tarrant put his cup and saucer down firmly. "That's rubbish, son, and you know it. All through history free men have had to fight the wrong war in the wrong place. But that's the one they're stuck with. That's why, one of these days, we'll knock out those bridges at Toko-ri."

Flag plot grew silent. The two men stared at each other. For in every war there is one target whose name stops conversation. You say that name and the men who must fly against that target sit mute and stare ahead. In Europe, during World War II it was Ploesti or Peenemunde. In the Pacific it was Truk or the Yawata steel works. Now, to the navy off Korea, it was the deadly concentration of mountains and narrow passes and festering gun emplacements that hemmed the vital bridges at Toko-ri. Here all communist supplies to the central and eastern front assembled. Here the communists were vulnerable.

Finally Brubaker asked, "Do we have to knock out those particular bridges?"

"Yes, we must. I believe without question that some morning a bunch of communist generals and commissars will be holding a meeting to discuss the future of the war. And a messenger will run in with news that the Americans have knocked out even the bridges at Toko-ri. And that little thing will convince the Reds that we'll never stop . . . never give in . . . never weaken in our purpose."

Again the two men studied each other and the admiral asked, "More coffee?" As Brubaker held his cup the old man said gruffly, "But I didn't call you here to discuss strategy. I'm supposed to chew you out." With the coffee pot he indicated the file of papers.

"They crying because I wrecked that wheel?"

"No. Because of your wife."

The astonishment on Brubaker's face was so real that Tarrant was convinced the young man was unaware his wife and two daughters were in Japan. Nevertheless he had a job to do so he asked, "You knew she was in Japan?"

"She made it!" A look of such triumph and love captured Brubaker's face that the admiral felt he ought to look away. Then quietly the young man said, "This is more than a guy dares hope for, sir."

"You better hope you don't get a court martial."

"I didn't tell her to come," Brubaker protested, but such a huge grin captured his face that he proved himself a liar.

Tarrant kept on being tough. "How'd she get here without your help?"

"Politics. Her father used to be senator from Wyoming."

Brubaker closed his eyes. He didn't care what happened. Nancy had made it. In the jet ready rooms he had known many pilots and their women troubles but he kept out of the bull sessions. He loved one girl. He had loved her with letters all through the last war in New Guinea and Okinawa. The day he got home he married her and she'd never given him any trouble. Now she was in Japan. Quietly he said to the admiral, "If she's broken a dozen rules to get here it's all right by me."

The old man didn't know what to say. "War's no place for women," he grunted.

Then Brubaker explained. "If my wife really is in Japan, I know why. She couldn't take America any longer. Watching people go on as if there were no war. We gave up our home, my job, the kids. Nobody else in Denver gave up anything."

This made the admiral angry. "Rubbish," he growled. "Burdens always fall on a few. You know that. Look at this ship. Every man aboard thinks he's a hero because he's in Korea. But only a few of you ever really bomb the bridges."

"But why my wife and me?"

"Nobody ever knows why he gets the dirty job. But any society is held together by the efforts . . . yes, and the sacrifices of only a few."

Brubaker couldn't accept this, Tarrant realized, and he was getting mad in the way that had characterized the admiral's sons. The old man had learned to respect this attitude, so he waited for the young pilot to speak but Brubaker happened to think of his wife waiting in Japan and his anger left. "Look," he said. "It's sleeting." The two men went to the dark window and looked down

upon the silent carrier, her decks fast with ice, her planes locked down by sleet.

"It'll be all right by dawn," the old man said.

"You ever hear what the pilots say about you and the weather? 'At midnight he runs into storms, but at take-off the deck's always clear, damn him.'"

The admiral laughed and said, "Three days you'll be in Japan. No more worry about take-offs for a while." He slapped the papers into a basket. "I'll tell Tokyo you had nothing to do with bringing your wife out here."

"Thank you, sir."

Quickly the admiral resumed his austere ways. Shaking Brubaker's hand he said stiffly, "Mighty glad you were rescued promptly. Why don't you see if the surgeon can spare a little extra nightcap."

As soon as Brubaker left, Tarrant thought, "His wife did right. If mine had come to Hawaii when our oldest son was killed, maybe things would have been different." But she had stayed home, as navy wives are expected to, and somewhere between the bombing of Pearl Harbor, where she lost one son, and the battle of Midway, where her second was killed trying to torpedo a Japanese carrier, her mind lost focus and she started to drink a lot and forget people's names until slowly, like petals of apple blossoms in spring, fragments of her gentle personality fell away and she would sit for hours staring at a wall.

Therefore it angered Tarrant when civilians like Brubaker suggested that he, a professional military man, could not understand war. Quite the contrary, he knew no civilian who understood war as thoroughly as he. Two sons and a home he had given to war. He had sacrificed the promotion of his career by insisting that America have the right weapons in case war came. And now in Korea, of the 272 pilots who had initially served with him in his task force, 31 had been killed by communist gunfire. Tonight he had come within two minutes of losing Brubaker, the best of the lot. No one need tell him what war was.

He was therefore doubly distressed when the people of the United States reacted like Brubaker: "Hold back the enemy but let someone else do it." He felt that his nation did not realize it was engaged in an unending war of many generations against resolute foes who were determined to pull it down. Some of the phases of this war would no doubt be fought without military battles. Whole decades might pass in some kind of peace but more likely the desultory battles would stagger on and from each community some young men would be summoned to do the fighting. They would be like Brubaker, unwilling to join up but tough adversaries when there was no alternative. And no matter where they might be sent to serve, Tarrant was positive that they would hate that spot the way he and Brubaker hated Korea. It would always be the wrong place.

As if to demonstrate afresh how ridiculous Korea was, the aerologist appeared with the midnight weather reports from Siberia and China. Since these nations were not officially at war, their weather stations were required to broadcast their customary summaries, just as American and Japanese stations broad-

cast theirs. But since Korea weather was determined by what had happened in Siberia and China two days before, the admiral always had the tip-off and the enemy gained nothing.

"All wars are stupid," the old man grunted as he filed the Siberian reports. "But we'd better learn to handle the stupidity." He recalled England and France, dragging through their Korean wars for more than two hundred years. They had avoided panicky general mobilization and millions of citizens must have spent their lives without worrying about war until something flared up like Crimea, South Africa or Khartoum. "And their wars weren't even forced upon them," he growled. Secretly he was frightened. Could America stick it out when dangers multiplied? If Englishmen and Frenchmen, and before them Athenians and the men of Spain, had been willing to support their civilizations through centuries of difficulty when often those difficulties were self-generated, what would happen to the United States if her citizenry abandoned the honorable responsibilities forced upon her by the relentless press of history?

He went up on the bridge to check the rolling sea for the last time. "What would they have us abandon to the enemy?" he asked. "Korea? Then Japan and the Philippines? Sooner or later Hawaii?" He walked back and forth pondering this problem of where abandonment would end, and as the sleet howled upon him he could not fix that line: "Maybe California. Colorado. Perhaps we'd stabilize at the Mississippi." He could not say. Instead he held to one unwavering conviction: "A messenger will run in and tell the commissars, 'They even knocked out the bridges at Toko-ri.' And that's the day they'll quit." Then reason might come into the world.

Upon that hope he ended the long day. He had checked the wind and the weather and the rolling of the sea and the number of planes ready for the dawn strike and the location of those storms that always hovered near his ships. He had posted the night watches and he could do no more.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Identify Mike Forney; Nestor Gamidge; Harry Brubaker; "whirly birds."
2. What were the names of the two carriers in Task Force 77? What was its mission?
3. What were the name and nickname of the Commanding Officer? Why did he like Harry Brubaker?
4. Why was Beer Barrel so called? What connection did this nickname have with his work?
5. Name a character from Texas; Kentucky; Colorado; Maine; Chicago.
6. What were the bridges at Toko-ri? What, according to the admiral, might be the result of their destruction?
7. How did Nancy Brubaker manage to get to Japan? Why did she come — besides wanting to be with her husband?
8. Mention several different colors of the uniforms of the men on the carriers. What color indicated a doctor? a plane captain? a crane operator?

9. Compare Brubaker's attitude toward the Korean War with that of the American people; with that of the admiral. Quote a sentence in which the admiral expresses his opinion of all wars.
10. Mention aspects of the Korean War touched upon in this selection. Do you think Michener was more interested in his theme or his characters?

#### COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS FOR SECTION XII

1. Read the rest of one of these novels, and write a synopsis of the action. Arrange a class report on each of the novels.
2. Judging from the episodes printed in this section, which of these novels do you think you would most enjoy reading? Why?
3. Compare the selections from Jane Austen, Sinclair Lewis, and Emily Brontë for verisimilitude (resemblance to real life). Which of these authors pictures life most realistically?
4. Compare the selections from Mark Twain, Charles Dickens, Henry James, and James Michener for handling of action. Which author is most graphic in his description of action? Which scene of action creates the greatest suspense?
5. Copy a speech which you consider typical of each of the following characters: Beer Barrel; Mrs. Joe Gargery; Mrs. Bennet; Admiral Tarrant; Randolph Miller; Joseph. Explain why the speech is typical of this individual and no other.
6. Find a description of each of the following characters: Heathcliff; Darcy; Joe Gargery; Mike Forney; Colonel Grangerford; Sondelius. Which one can you see most clearly? Why?
7. Which of the novels in this section would you classify as a novel of adventure? a novel of manners? a novel of social satire? Try to name one other novel which you have read in each of these categories.
8. Write down a one-sentence statement of a theme for each of the novels represented here. In which of these novels does theme seem less important? What theme would appeal to you for a novel which you might write? Should the chief purpose of a novel be to teach, or to entertain?
9. Compare the selections from Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, and Sinclair Lewis for humor. What different kinds of humor (e.g., social satire, caricature, etc.) are found?
10. Which masculine character in these selections do you consider outstanding? which feminine character? Which character did you most dislike?
11. Which novelists of the nineteenth century do you consider most modern in style and subject matter? Why? On the basis of novels you have read, what seem to be some trends in twentieth-century novels?